

overnment



Murtaza Bhutto's Widow, Ghinva, Accompanied by Pakistan's Interim PM Malik Khalid (L), Dec. 7, Said She Will Run Against Benazir in Feb. 3 National Elections
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IRAN NEWS

Asian Soccer Cup Results

Saudi 1-Iraq 0
Iran 3-Thailand 1
Japan 4-Uzbekistan 0
China 3-Syria 0



VOL. III, No. 624 TEHRAN Price 200 Rials

Tuesday December 10, 1996. Azar 20, 1375, Rajab 28, 1417

Arrogant Powers Are Guilty of Lying, Cheating and Fraud, Leader

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani accompanied by a group of government officials and Muslim ambassadors met the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, on the occasion of the Muslim feast of Mabath at Imam Khomeini Mosque here yesterday.

The Leader of Islamic Revolution congratulated his visitors on the occasion of the day and offered a brief account on the peculiarities of the Islamic faith.

He said: "With a realistic evaluation of the Bethat of his prophethood we can conclude that his Bethat with its dissimilar peculiarities is the biggest incident of the human history, because the glowing of this light in sacred heart of the prophet of Islam and the tolerance of this great responsibility by his prophethood is like a loophole connecting the world of creation and the material world to the invisible."

"Bethat means the building of a new world and shattering the un-

godly institutions that are also tyrannical, and the first step after Bethat is struggle and movement, because no prophet was able to communicate divine message to the human society without that. On this basis the prophets encountered various enemies from the outset of their Bethat. But the Prophet of Islam (S) eventually succeeded to kindle a light at the heart of the era of ignorance which will have more light with the passing of history, and will lead more societies to guidance.

"Islam marched toward the formation of an Islamic system from the beginning on the basis of a difficult struggle, and his prophethood (S) was able to institute this system in 'Yathreb'."

This issue indicates that Islam is not separate from life, politics and the management of the state and government, and to develop divine thoughts and realize religious goals it is crucial to use power.

"In the world that the oppressors, capitalists, and owners of big

companies attack every call of justice from every side and use iron fists against it religious goals cannot be realized without struggle and effort and without power."

"The orientation of power and government at an Islamic society must be toward goals and aspirations that the Holy Quran stresses their realization. Therefore, on the basis of a general criterion a government that does not march toward the direction of realizing Islamic aspirations is going astray."

"Humans must be equipped with good ethics, because the principal and final purposes of Bethat are based on development and propagation of good ethics among all members of the Muslim society, and the Islamic society of Iran must make a principal move as complementary to the great Islamic Revolution and in the first phase engage in its development among its own society by establishing an Islamic ethical system, and in the second phase propagate

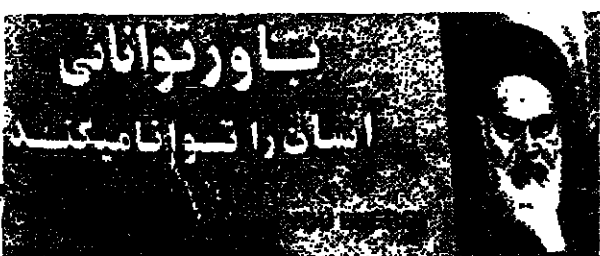
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Leader of Islamic Iran Ayatollah Khamenei (2nd L) President Rafsanjani (L) Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Nateq-Nouri (3rd L) and Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Yazdi at yesterday's celebrations of Mabath, the day Hazrat Mohammad (S) was appointed by the Almighty as his last Prophet.

PHOTO BY HATAMI

Rafsanjani Inaugurates New Road Link to Caspian Region



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK
TEHRAN - President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani yesterday inaugurated the Tehran-North Highway, the largest road project in Iran, on the day of the feast of Mab'ath, which marks Prophet Mohammad's (SAWA) assignment to prophethood, IRNA reported.

A ceremony kicked off executive operations for the construction project at its starting point in the northern province of Mazandaran. Rafsanjani ordered the start of operations via a phone link from Tehran. He said that the highway's construction was among the valuable tasks undertaken in Iran's period of reconstruction.

Annually, 10 to 12 million people travel north to the Caspian region, and Rafsanjani said the highway would play an essential

role in saving time and energy. The President said Iran's development of its southern ports made the new road inevitable, and he forecast a highway connection to Turkey which could eventually

link the Islamic Republic to Europe on the completion of a Turkish road project from Ankara up to the Iranian border, IRNA reported.

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U.S. Proposals for Israeli-Palestinian Summit

GAZA CITY (Dispatches) - U.S. diplomats have put forward a new set of proposals in a bid to bring about an Israeli-Palestinian summit meeting to seal an agreement on Israel's withdrawal from Hebron, officials said yesterday.

Palestinian negotiator Hassan Asfour said the Palestinians were "holding intensive contacts with the U.S. and other concerned countries" and that there had been "some new formulas" to break the

deadlock in negotiations with Israel.

"Our contacts with the United States might take a certain shape," he told Palestinian radio, adding that Egypt was also closely involved in the talks.

Nabil Abu Rudeina, a top adviser to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, confirmed that the "American and Egyptian efforts are continuing, but so far there are no results."

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Indonesia Takes over OIC Chair, Lashes out at Israel

JAKARTA, INDONESIA (AFP) - Indonesia yesterday took over the chairmanship of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) for next year and promptly lashed out at Israel accusing it of blocking the Middle East peace process.

"In the Middle East the peace process is bogged down in a dangerous impasse as Israel's acts of

provocation indicate that it is renegeing with impunity on its obligation," Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said in a speech at a five-day OIC conference, which started here yesterday.

"Thus bloodshed and violence still mar everyday life in the occupied territory," said Alatas, who took over the OIC chairmanship

from Lamine Camara of the Republic of Guinea.

Alatas' sharp criticism against Israel reflected sentiments expressed earlier yesterday by President Suharto and OIC Secretary-General Hamid Algabid.

Alatas called for unwavering support for the national rights of the Palestinians, "particularly through the resumption of negotiations based on the Declaration

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Office of Traffic Control

Violations in crosswalks will be recorded.

Traffic Surveillance Headquarters

SUMMARY

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EDITORIAL

Persian Gulf Arab Leaders' Communique Has the Least Significance in Iran

The shaky alliance of the countries on the southern shore of the Persian Gulf issued an American-dictated communique in which as usual they accused Iran of destabilizing the region.

Persian Gulf Arab leaders, whose annual summit in Doha was boycotted by Bahrain amid a dispute with host country Qatar, yesterday expressed "strong fears over Iran's deployment of surface-to-surface missiles in the Persian Gulf, which amounts to a direct threat to (Persian Gulf) states..."

The tottering alliance binds Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, the UAE and Qatar.

In their summit the leaders of the five participating countries only parroted what U.S. Navy officials had said in July accusing Iran of almost doubling the number of surface-to-surface missiles near the world's oil shipping lanes.

All statistics released by reliable international agencies confirm that Iran's defense budget is the lowest compared to other regional countries.

With a 1995 defense budget of \$13 billion, Saudi Arabia accounts for fully one third of military spending in the region, and \$8.1 billion of the Saudi military spending was spent on purchasing weapons, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Iran, on the other hand, allocated only \$800 million for defense in the current fiscal Iranian year.

But the Arab leaders of the precarious alliance, following American dictates, spoke of their alarm at Iran's intensive arms buildup which they said exceeded its legitimate needs.

The above-mentioned figures make one wonder which is the country that is exceeding its legitimate defense needs? Is it Iran with a population of 65 million and a defense budget of \$800 million? Or is it Saudi Arabia with a mere 15 million population and several billion dollars in defense spending?

The Arab leaders also stressed their desire to have "good neighborly relations with Iran."

The expression 'desire for good neighborly relations with Iran' is just a bunch of empty words which these leaders use from time to time without any conviction or sincerity. From the very first day of the culmination of the Islamic Revolution these same leaders have worked and plotted against Islamic Iran which always called for good and friendly relations with all its neighbors.

Contrary to Iran, the leaders of the Persian Gulf, since the formation of their alliance in 1981, have been issuing anti-Iran statements which has now become a routine with no value or significance for the Islamic Republic or for the people of the region.

Yesterday after accusing Iran the leaders of the five countries not only obeyed their Washington masters, but

See Page 13

PRESIDENT:

The Holy Quran Is the Secret of Our Success Story

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Hojatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani inaugurated the thirteenth international competitions on the recitation, interpretation and verse memorization of the Holy Quran at Huseiniyeh Ershad here Sunday.

Referring to the Holy Quran's immortal and constructive influence on the individual and the society, President Rafsanjani said that if the Muslims were to discipline their lives according to the teachings of the Holy Book and adopt the Holy Quran as the criterion for their lives, they will certainly attain success and well-being.

The President went on to say that with the exception of the first period after the advent of Islam, the Muslim world was devoid of the society which fully adhered to the Holy Quran and practiced its inductions in all aspects of its lives.

He added, quoted by IRNA, that consequently it is very difficult to say and judge the depth of influence the Quranic teachings would have, "although our experience in the life of Iran's Islamic society is limited."

"I do not have a speck of doubt that if a society were to adopt the Quranic model, it would certainly attain guidance and a blissful life," noted the President.

The hojatoleslam stated that the Holy Quran has the most en-

chanting and most captivating voice, and along with its eloquent composition and depth of meaning "is an ocean whose treasures no one has yet discovered."

Pointing to the guiding role of the Quran in the triumph and consolidation of the Islamic Revolution and its reconstruction phase, he remarked: "It is our firm belief that it was the Quran which made the Revolution triumph against a regime fully backed by the East and the West, and led to victory a people who had no material instruments."

After the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, noted Rafsanjani, it was the Quran which silenced seditions "and with the help of the Quran we emerged victorious in an imposed war in which the enemy was backed on all fronts by various countries. And due to the blessings of the Quran, in less than a decade Iran has been able to attain the degree of success, which could take other countries half a century or even a century to attain, he said.

President Rafsanjani dwelt on the achievements of the Second Five-Year Development Plan, saying that Iran had succeeded in reviving all aspects of reconstruction in the areas of industries, agriculture and services. He added that many new areas had been created which did not initially exist in the country.

He said that some six years ago a neighboring country offered to



provide Iran with electricity, but now the situation changed so rapidly that Iran is exporting electricity to that very same country.

As further proof of Islamic Iran's success story, the President said that today Iranian railway experts were helping other countries lay railroad tracks, "and all this

has happened because the Holy Quran has been our main source of guidance."

He said that he was happy to see the foundation for the attainment of social justice, Islamic culture and moral codes firmly set.

Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani said

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Bangladesh for Expansion of Ties with Iran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Outgoing Iranian Ambassador to Dhaka, Mahmoud Bayat, met with Bangladeshi Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdus Samad Azad, in Dhaka Sunday.

The Bangladeshi minister said that expansion of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran was a priority on the agenda of the ruling Awami League Party.

Also discussed at the meeting were the ways to implement the memoranda of understanding inked by Tehran and Dhaka especially those involving the setting up of air and shipping lines and construction of an oil refinery in Bangladesh.

The two sides voiced satisfaction with the increasing trend of exchange of trade delegations between Iran and Bangladesh, expressing hope that the level of trade between the two countries would rise significantly in the near future, IRNA reported.

Quake Jolts Boroujen

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - An earthquake with a magnitude of 4.2 points on the open-ended Richter scale jolted Boroujen, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Province, at 06:03 hours local time (02:33 GMT) yesterday.

The seismological center of Boroujen affiliated to Tehran University's Geophysics Department registered the epicenter of the tremor 15 kms southwest of the center.

No report is yet available on the possible casualties or loss of property.

UNICEF Deplores "Treachery" of Iranian Cameraman

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) office here last week described as "treacherous" the action of an Iranian cameraman who made a distorted film on a mental asylum in Tehran.

UNICEF's Policy Director in Iran Mohammad Reza Hussein told Kayhan Havai weekly that the cameraman 'Kaveh Golestan' who filmed scenes from the Imam Ali asylum for the mentally ill in northern Tehran under the supervision of Mrs. Nahid Zare has added other scenes to it and sold it to the American CNN TV (network) through the Associated Press news

agency before handing it over to the UNICEF office.

"We never even imagined anyone would commit such a treacherous act as this," Hussein said adding, "We had ordered the shooting of the film but Golestan turned it into a distorted report and sold it to CNN."

The film, made at the request of the UNICEF, was originally aimed at showing the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the care of handicapped children, but it turned out to be an appalling three-minute footage aired by CNN and showing scenes of the worst cases of mental retardation.

He said the asylum was one of

Iran's best for mentally ill and handicapped children.

Meanwhile, the director of the foreign media department at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Reza Darbandi told Kayhan Havai in a telephone interview that dealing with such matters is a legal and professional duty of his department, and he promised to seriously look into the matter.

"We had asked the Welfare Organization to allow UNICEF to produce a film on the services given to the mentally handicapped by the Iranian government not to produce a totally distorted anti-Iran film," Darbandi said.

Iranian Prisoners Choose Not to Escape

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - A bus transporting 20 Iranian prisoners collided with two trucks in western Iran, but the inmates opted to stay in custody despite the opportunity for them to escape.

According to a Persian daily Kayhan, the prisoners stayed seated in the bus until the police came to retrieve them.

Riyadh Willing to Expand Ties with Tehran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The King of Saudi Arabia, Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, said Sunday that he was willing to expand ties with Iran, adding that he was ready to meet with Iranian leaders if they came to Riyadh.

The daily news which was based on a report from the Saudi Press Syndicate, said that the King's statement was made during a meeting with the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud bin Faisal Al Saud, in Riyadh.

Former Ambassador to Sue Newspaper

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's former Ambassador to Tajikistan Ali Ashraf Mojtabeh Shabestari is to file a lawsuit against 'Kayhan Havai', the weekly airmail edition of Kayhan, for claiming that the ambassador had defected to a foreign country.

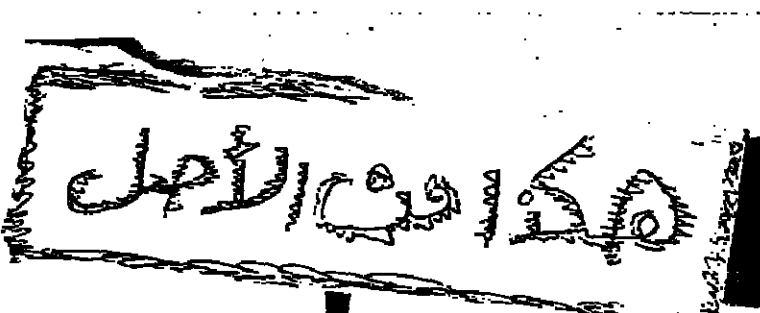
Shabestari told IRNA Saturday

that the claim by the managing director of the bilingual weekly to the effect that he has joined the outlawed Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), had tarnished the image and prestige of the Islamic Republic of Iran and he himself.

Shabestari returned to Tehran

recently after his 5-year tenure in Dushanbe, Tajikistan ended. Upon return he was appointed as head of the International Economic Affairs Department of the Foreign Ministry.

The former ambassador said that such unfounded claims stemmed from "personal grudge."



IRAN
DOMESTIC NEWS

RAVI
WRITES

India's Mishra Says Good-bye to Sarkar, Kunkli and Hosts Dinner

Indian Embassy Counselor Malay Mishra's residence is an occasional venue for multi-national gatherings for spicy and tasty food and interesting chit-chat.

Last Wednesday was one such get together and Mishra and his wife Ms. Padma invited friends to say good-bye to his embassy's Nantu Sarkar and Hungarian Embassy's Peter Kunkli and their wives. Economic and Commercial Counselor Sarkar is due to leave here for Bern, Switzerland for similar assignment while Kunkli goes back home for another important diplomatic post.



(From left) Roquefeuil, Mishra, Eickhoff



(From left) Mikkelsen, Kamal and Aldea

Mishra and Padma are to leave Tehran for India soon for holidays.

One of the guests was Danish Embassy's Martin Mikkelsen who, along with his wife, is vegetarian and loses no opportunity for making others understand that vegetables are the most suitable food for mankind.

Mikkelsen was telling us that more and more vegetarian restaurants are now being opened in Europe particularly in Denmark.

Mikkelsen were recently in India where they bought a plot in Bangalore, south India and are planning to build a house there to spend their holidays there.

German Embassy Minister Counselor Walter Eickhoff was looking relaxed as his country recently faced a crisis because of an unfounded allegation against Iranian officials. The wise and appropriate move by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has almost restored normal relations between the two countries.

Bangladesh Embassy's Mustafa Kamal and Romanian Embassy's Gabriel Aldea, and South Africa's Ebrahim Edries were also there discussing a number of topics amongst themselves.

AFP Bureau Chief in Tehran Christophe de Roquefeuil was there at the Mishra dinner. The French news agency, AFP, a few years ago produced news for only a few hours a day.

The same AFP is now feeding the media across the world and around the clock. It very often breaks news about the events taking place all over the globe. Most journalists believe that the AFP, unlike certain other news agencies, is not biased against any particular ideology.

Mishra introduced us to a newcomer in his embassy, R.K. Jha who replaced K.J. Sagar.

Nateq-Nouri Calls for Unity of Muslims

IRAN NEWS PARLIAMENTARY DESK
TEHRAN - Majlis Speaker Hojjatolislam Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri here Sunday called for unity of world Muslims to defend the ideals of Prophet Mohammad (S) and confront conspiracies of enemies of Islam.

The Speaker made the remark at the open session of the Majlis on the eve of the feast of Mab'ath (the day when the holy Prophet Mohammad (S) was appointed by the Almighty as the last Prophet), which was celebrated yesterday, 27th of the Islamic month of Rajab.

The Speaker added, quoted by IRNA, that Muslims are celebrating this auspicious occasion at a time when the Islamic lands con-

tinued to remain under Israeli occupation and at a time when the oppressed Palestinian Muslims are being tyrannized by Israeli soldiers.

The Hojjatolislam also expressed deep regrets that fratricide and civil war continue in the war-ravaged Afghanistan. He said that the factions involved in the ongoing Afghan fighting fail to realize that foreigners are fanning the flames of war in that country.

He expressed hope that Muslims will unite to defend the ideals of Prophet Mohammad (S) and pave the way for the reappearance of Hazrat Mahdi (A.S.), the 12th Imam of the Household of the Prophet of Islam (S).

President Congratulates Tanzanian Counterpart

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's President Hojjatolislam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here Sunday send a congratulatory message to President Benjamin Mkapa on the anniversary of independence of Tanzania.

In the message to his Tanzanian counterpart, President Rafsanjani said, "I once again appreciate the hospitality of Your Excellency and the friendly Tanzanian nation during my recent visit to Dar es Salaam and hope that it will serve to further develop bilateral relations in political, economic, cultural and international areas," IRNA reported.

Tanzania became independent on December 9, 1962.



President Rafsanjani (R) with Mkapa (File Photo)

Chinese Official Dismisses Concerns About Missile Sales

WASHINGTON (AFP) - China's Defense Minister Chi Haotian dismissed yesterday U.S. concerns about sales of missiles and nuclear technology to Iran and Pakistan as exaggerated by the Western press.

"Some of these issues have been exaggerated, and some of these issues simply do not exist," Chi said at the start of two days meetings with U.S. leaders.

Defense Secretary William Perry, welcoming Chi to the Pentagon with full military honors, said the issue of weapons of mass destruction would be discussed yesterday and expressed hope for an agreement.

Perry emphasized the importance of developing a "spirit of trust" between the two countries, which faced off militarily in the Taiwan straits early this year following a series of threatening Chinese missile tests and exercises.

"Dealing with disagreements in a spirit of trust is important for the security and stability of the entire western Pacific region," Perry said.

Taiwan, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the situation in North Korea were among the prime topics to be discussed during the visit, the highest level by Chinese military leaders since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Chi, who arrived in the United States Thursday at the head of a 20-member delegation, will be visiting U.S. military bases across the country before winding up the 10-day tour in Hawaii.

LET'S MEMORIZE THE QURAN
SURA 59, THE GATHERING (AL-HASHR)

In the Name of God,
The Beneficent, the Merciful

18. Have fear of God, believers!
And let each soul consider
What it for its Tomorrow offers;
Have fear of God, since God well knows
Of your affairs.

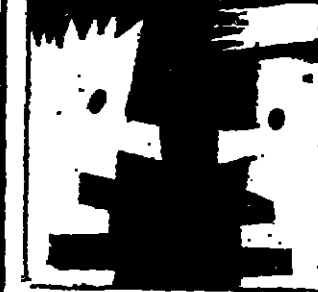
(F.N.)

*The 30th part of the Holy Quran is obtainable in exquisite book-form from: RASA Publication Tel. 883 4844-5

PRAYER TIMES

Noon (Zohr)	11:57
Evening (Maghreb)	17:13
Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:25
Tomorrow's Sunrise	07:04

TÊTE-A-TÊTE



Good News!

'Sir, reliable sources confirm that the U.N. special mediator in Afghan affairs, the German diplomat Herr Holl, is also a part-time CIA agent, and that he has done his best to sow discord among the warring factions in Afghanistan in order to prevent all efforts to bring them to the negotiating table for peace, isn't that good news, master?'

'Certainly! It's good news for the Taliban growers of poppy fields, for the sellers of arms to various factions, for many foreign agents, apart from Herr Holl, who get paid for the good work they do in Afghanistan, and all those people who hate to see any kind of peace established in this war-torn country, yes, it's good news for everybody except the poor people of Afghanistan!'

'Oh, I see! In that case, perhaps Mr. Boutros-Ghali will do something about it, won't he?'

'Well, he hasn't got anything to lose, has he?'

ABU SINA

POLISH JOURNALISTS:

Iran Has Essential Role in Regional Equations

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK
TEHRAN - Iran's Ambassador to Warsaw, Mohammad Taheri received the Polish journalists from widely-circulated papers. The journalists said that Iran, with its lofty culture and civilization, has a great role to play in the region's political equations.

The editors in chief and directors of political departments of Polish dailies pointed to the effective presence of Iran in the former Soviet states and in helping resolve

regional crises such as the Tajik and Karabakh problems.

According to an IRNA report, they also pointed out that Islamic Iran has proved its hospitality by accommodating a large number of refugees. They recalled Iran's excellent hospitality to Polish refugees during the Second World War.

The Iranian ambassador briefed the Polish journalists on the latest developments in the country.

See Page 13

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Lebanese Minister Says He would Sign Military Pact with Iran

TEHRAN (AP) - Lebanon is prepared to sign a military cooperation agreement with Iran if the Middle East peace process fails to make headway, Lebanon's defense minister says.

"I would be happy to sign a pact with Iran," Mohsen Dalloul told the Farsi-language newspaper Iran.

"It is natural that any time it is expedient for Iran and Lebanon, they will do even more than sign

ing a pact," Dalloul said in the interview published Sunday.

Dalloul was responding to a question about whether he was willing to sign a military agreement with Iran if peace talks with Israel failed. But he did not elaborate on other cooperation.

Despite his comments, Lebanon does not want to be seen as moving too close to Iran, which the United States considers a

rogue state.

Lebanon's government has pressed Washington to lift a nine-year-old ban on travel by Americans to Lebanon.

The ban was imposed amid kidnappings and attacks on Americans and other Westerners in Beirut by pro-Iranian militants.

Peace talks between Lebanon and Israel have made little headway since they began in 1991.



s "Treachery"
imeraman

I Ties

Iranian Prisoners
Choose Not to
Escape

Iranian Prisoners
Choose Not to
Escape

ECONOMIC NOTE

The Necessity of a Unified Third Party Liability Motor Insurance System Among ECO Member Countries



ALI AKBAR ABDOLRASHIDI

Part One

After the Second World War, on January 25, 1949, the Principal Working Party on Road Transport of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) of the United Nations adopted a recommendation, which is called Geneva Recommendation 5, which became the basis for the establishment of a system, nowadays called the Green Card system.

The Green Card system has come into existence to provide a guarantee for the settlement of claims arising from accidents caused by motorists on a temporary visit to other countries where accidents occur.

Undoubtedly the original recommendation adopted by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in 1949 had been prepared after long series of discussions and deliberations on the problems confronted by European 'visitors' who were victims of an accident in another European 'visited country'. The problem was, in fact, the pursuit of claims by individuals which was expensive and difficult.

These difficulties mostly included:

* Ascertaining the identity of the responsible motorist and his or her insurer;

* Obtaining formal (police and/or experts') reports relating to injuries sustained and the damage to their vehicles;

* Encouraging the insurer of the responsible motorist to respond to the claims sufficiently and positively.

The Green Card system, has been effectively working during the last four decades with the aim of providing a guarantee for the settlement of claims. The Green Card system, without a formal constitution, nowadays has a General Assembly among members to facilitate the settlement of claims and to bypass the said difficulties.

The Green Card system has, at the moment, 35 members all of them, except one, European or Mediterranean. The only member out of this region is Iran, which is represented by Bimeh Markazi Iran. It must be mentioned that Turkey as a European and ECO member country is also represented in this system.

In 1994, there were some 300,000 claims at the international level, involving 30,000 bodily injury cases including 1,500 fatalities resulting in almost 50,000 injured third party victims compensated through the organization of the Green Card system.

However, the Green Card system is not the only such system in the world. Recently and during the civil war of the former Yugoslav republics, some of them such as Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were not able to utilize the membership of Yugoslavia in the Green Card system for their transborder traffic.

They, therefore, decided to introduce a bilateral system, called the Brown Card, to guarantee fair and quick settlement of claims of their drivers against each other.

In 1995 the Green Card General Assembly in Hamburg, Germany, unanimously decided not to accept new members. Specifically, applications from Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, both Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and ECO members, were rejected on the basis of lack of enough hard currency resources for settlement of claims and non-existence of compulsory third party liability motor insurance system in these two countries, although both countries had claimed that they were introducing such system.

Members of the Green Card system even advised that any further application from such countries, as CIS states, shall not be accepted in the near future. But it seems that such a decision is part of the long-term policy of the Green Card system.

1- Iraq's membership in the Green Card System was suspended after its attack against Kuwait in 1990.

2- This policy was reiterated in the Green Card General Assembly in Casablanca in May 1996.

To be Continued

Indo-Iran Gas Line Project Runs into Rough Weather



AQAZADEH

GOA, INDIA (AFP) - Iran on Sunday told India to resolve its "political problems" with neighboring Pakistan so that a proposed five-billion-dollar gas line project can get under way.

"The political problem is between India and Pakistan and it is for them to settle it for progress on the project," Gholamreza Aqazadeh, Iranian oil minister told newsmen here at the Fifth International Energy Conference.

The pact for the 2,000-kilometer (1,240 miles) gas line project from Iran, through Afghanistan and Pakistan, was signed in 1993 but ran into problems with Islamabad refusing to grant approval for a joint feasibility study.

It was meant to supply about 100 million cubic meters per day of liquefied natural gas to India and Pakistan.

"One possibility is that the three of us sit together and talk. We are waiting for the elections to be over in Pakistan and we will talk to the democratically-elected government as the project will benefit all the three countries," Aqazadeh said.

"Our priority is that the pipeline is laid," he said. "We are trying to convince Pakistan."

But a senior Pakistani official rejected Iran's offer and said he favored "bilateral talks" with India for finding a solution to the project.

"We also need natural gas. Let the impression not be there that we do not want this," said Gulfaraz Ahmed, Pakistan's petroleum secretary. "We need gas soon, we have some other options and we want gas at the lowest prices."

Ahmed dismissed India's fears of disruption in the gas supply, where it passes through Pakistan.

"I do not think that anyone can question the supply ... and the stakes of the countries involved in the project," Ahmed said.

"The issue need not be on a formal agenda and can be taken up at the next meeting of foreign ministers of the two countries" to be held shortly, he said.

Aqazadeh said the global deal See Page 13

Habibi Confers with New ECO Secretary-General

TEHRAN (IRNA) - First Vice President Hassan Habibi said here Sunday that the current world situation requires multilateral cooperation among the nations forming regional economic blocs such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

In a meeting with Onder Ozar of Turkey, the new secretary-general of the 10-nation organization, Habibi said the ECO secretary-general could play an effective role in reinforcing closer ties among member states.

He called for measures to activate the private sector and chambers of commerce of member



HABIBI

states within the framework of the organization.

Habibi suggested that the ECO

Secretariat explore practical ways for cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the European Union (EU).

He said ECO should also initiate joint investment projects among the member states.

In reference to the friendly and brotherly relations between Iran and Turkey, Habibi said Tehran is interested in growing ties with Ankara.

Ozar said the ECO Secretariat would work on the agenda of de-

See Page 13

Kyrgyz President Calls for Expansion of Ties Among ECO States



AKAYEV

BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN (IRNA) - Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev in a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Bishkek Morteza Tavassoli-Hojati here yesterday underlined the necessity of further expansion of ties among the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states.

Akayev said that Bishkek was deeply interested in further expansion of its ties with Tehran.

He congratulated the Iranian government and nation on the feast of Mab'ath, marking the anniversary of Prophet Mohammad's (S) assignment to prophethood and said that he would soon visit Iran.

Tavassoli-Hojati in return submitted a message from President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Akayev, in which he had congratulated his Kyrgyz counterpart on November 26, the day when new members of ECO joined in.

The message had underlined the importance of enhancing ECO's activities and Tehran-Bishkek mutual cooperation.

Founded by Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, the ECO has extended its membership grouping Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

Kuwait Shows Interest in Purchase of Iranian Equipment

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Kuwait deputy minister of electricity and water, Khalid Hamud, here Sunday termed the Iranian industrial achievements as "unbelievable" announced his country's keen interest on the purchase of water equipment from Iran.

Inspecting the 4th Iranian Water Industries Exhibition, Hamud said that his country was ready to purchase water meters, pumps, pipes and faucets from Iran.

Applauding the standard and quality of the Iranian products, he stressed that there existed no barrier in the promotion and exchange of trade between the two countries.

Khalid Hamud finally concluded that he expected to hold

talks with Iranian officials on export of engineering and technical services to his country, which, he said, will help boost up bilateral relations.

Iran, Azerbaijan Discuss Labor-Social Affairs

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN (IRNA) - During a meeting here Saturday with the Iranian charge d'affaires, Afshar Soleimani, Azeri minister of labor and social protection, Ali Naqiev, underlined the necessity of further expansion of bilateral ties.

The Azeri minister, referring to vast commonalities of the two countries, expressed willingness of the Baku government to make use of Iran's experiences in the fields of employment and job protection measures.

During the meeting, the Iranian diplomat handed over a message from Iranian minister of labor and social affairs, Hussein Kamali, congratulating Naqiev on his appointment to the post last month.

The Azeri minister thanked Iranian minister of labor for his message and invited him to visit Azerbaijan Republic.

FAO to Help Iran in Efforts to Step up Sugar Cane Production

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK
TEHRAN - The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a U.N. agency, will provide \$276,000 for a project in Iran's Khuzestan Province to develop sugar cane varieties for commercial use in efforts to step up sugar cane production to meet the internal demand, under an agreement signed today.

The agreement was signed at the Agriculture Ministry by Seyed Hassan Tabatabaie, deputy agriculture minister for utilization sys-

Information System Offers Service to 300,000 Subscribers

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of post, telegraph and telephone, Mohammad Gharazi, said here Saturday that the information system in Iran can offer services to 300,000 subscribers nationally.

He said the national information system, code named, 'Share' and 'Iran-Pak' can offer information to every subscriber nationally or internationally.

He said the national information system had an additional 10,000 outputs reaching a total of 11,200, one of the largest information systems in the Middle East.

The PTT minister said that to use the national information system as a substitute for older systems would help economize on national expenditures and increase per capita income.

Gharazi said that for the time being the Iranians spend about \$20 million for obtaining various information through books, periodicals and the like which, he said, would drop by two-thirds once the people turn to existing national information networks.

The national information networks 'Share' and 'Iran Pak' have about 11,000 subscribers nationally and internationally, he added.

tem, and Dr. Gamal M. Ahmed, the FAO representative in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Under the terms of the agreement, FAO will provide the services of three specialists in various fields as well as laboratory equipment and materials to initiate testing of selected sugar cane varieties that would help bring productivity to an acceptable level, according to a press release issued by the United Nations Information Center here.

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r Cane Production

end of a Chinese civil war in 1949, interpreted the trip as Taiwan's attempt to promote a fully independent island.

"Taiwan is a member of international society, entitled to have parallel contacts with other countries. There is no logical relations between resumption of cross-strait talks and presidential or pragmatic diplomacy," Shi said. The island has in the past 40-odd years tried to increase its international profile despite stern opposition by China.

Chang King-Yuh, chairman of the MAC, Taiwan's top mainland policy planning body, told reporters Taiwan has always ready to negotiate. "If the Chinese communist authorities are not ready, we can wait patiently," he said.

within the body) are infecting organisms that do not respond to treatment with the same antibiotics that are so successful against bacteria. And diagnosis can be tricky, depending on the results of throat and stool cultures, as well as certain cell changes in the spinal fluid that only occur during a viral infection.

When the disease is caused by a virus, such as the kind that are responsible for mumps, mononucleosis or infectious hepatitis, the severity of the disease can range from one with no symptoms at all to one that is most severe. However, even these desperately ill patients may recover completely.

organization's Central Council," she added. "The congress also decided that the first meeting and working committee of the council, with 13 members, be held in Tehran."

"During the first meeting of the Central Council, which was held in Tehran Dec. 7-9, the members discussed about the council's agenda and executive regulations and also the way of running the organization."

She stressed, "Our main objective is to expand Iranian MPs' activities in the organization and to encourage other Islamic women MPs to join the organization."

At the present time, women MPs from 30 Islamic countries are members of the organization.

veloping cooperation among member states in the field of telecommunications, energy, transport and trade.

He said the Turkish president is interested in developing closer cooperation with Iran.

According to Ozar the solidarity and cooperation between Iran and Turkey would serve to promote the interests of ECO.

The ECO secretary-general said he would work to activate the ECO institutions operating in the field of trade, shipping and insurance and enhance ECO's cooperation with ASEAN, SAARC and the EU.

that the privilege which Iran today enjoys, in comparison with its past history and in contrast with other countries, is that Iran has opted to adopt the teachings of the Holy Quran as the criterion of its expression of life and progress for

both the individual and the society.

After the end of his speech the President honored Miss Nasrin Jafari, a twelve-year-old girl student and Haj Mohammad Haj Abol-Qasem as two personalities who have memorized the whole holy text of the Quran.

At the end of the inaugural ceremony, Hojatoleslam Emam Jamarani congratulated the nation and the Muslim world on the auspicious anniversary of Mab'ath (Rajab 27), the day the Almighty commissioned Prophet Mohammad (S) as the last messenger to mankind.

Ranking reciters and memorizers of the Holy Book are participating in the international Quran competition.

Rajab 27 was the day on which the first verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to Prophet Mohammad at Mount Hira near Mecca in 610 A.D. through archangel Gabriel.

The Quran, which supersedes all other previously-revealed scriptures such as the Torah and the Bible and is regarded as most comprehensive and dynamic constitution for the human race, was revealed over a period of 23 years.

mand for petroleum products would be much higher than forecast and global oil prices would "harden".

Taberi, contrasting the turmoil in several neighboring countries, underscored Iran's effective role in regional equations as a "stable country in an unstable region."

The Polish journalists also visited an exhibition of Polish-language books printed in Iran and Iranian English-language newspapers at the embassy.

the same in the world that is thirsty for ethics.

"The propagation of lying, misrepresentations, and subscribing to the wrong and also fraudulent acts and cheating are among the biggest crimes of the international arrogance headed by U.S. government. Today humanity is afflicted with troubles due to the absence of ethics, and Islam and Muslims can bestow on humanity the best ethical gift.

"Most assassinations done here and there in the world are ascribed to and there in the world are ascribed to and there in the world are ascribed to and among them the U.S. government. The arrogant powers throughout the world perpetrate homicide, assassinations and every illegal act, and in connection with Iran they support the most notorious terrorists of the world and they give them sanctuary and dignify them with their friendly exchanges. They openly support the Zionist regime which is a government based on terrorism, cruelty, tyranny and at the same time they carry the banner of struggle against terrorism and this is an agonizing reality that shows their lies and their deprivation of human ethics."

Toward the end of his address, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stressed the need for a big popular movement on the direction of promoting growth of Islamic values, and called on preachers and speakers throughout the nation to dedicate themselves to that task. Meanwhile, in a brief speech before the address of the Leader of

the Islamic Revolution, President Hojatoleslam Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani referred to the Behar feast as a great and inspiring day.

He added that a Caspian Sea shipping line would be established to transport passengers between Iran and other littoral states, a move he says would provide a source of transit revenue.

The President said the Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei had expressed his consent to the Tehran-North Highway, which could be seen as strong support for the project.

The 121-km highway between Tehran Province and the northern regions of Iran is predicted to cost 1,400 billion rials, IRNA reported.

Syrian Premier in China

BEIJING, CHINA - China wants to see a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East and will continue to support the peace effort there, Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng said yesterday.

During talks with Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zohbi, who is on his first visit to China, Li said agreements which have been reached by the relevant parties in the region should be adhered to, the Xinhua news agency reported.

Li said that Syria, as an important country in the Middle East, was playing a pivotal role in the peace process in the region.

Zohbi conveyed President Hafez al-Assad's greetings to President Jiang Zemin and Li, saying the purpose of his visit was to further promote friendship between the two countries, especially their cooperation in economic and trade sectors, the official news agency said.

Zohbi arrived here yesterday for a six-day tour that marks the first official visit to China by a Syrian premier.

Arabs Hold Conference on Nuclear Power

DAMASCUS, SYRIA - An Arab conference on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy opened in the Syrian capital yesterday, with experts from 10 countries taking part.

The Director of the Syrian Atomic Energy Agency, Ibrahim Osman, told AFP that the five-day conference would focus on the uses of nuclear energy in agriculture, industry and medicine.

Ghali Gives Final O.K. to Oil-for-Food

UNITED NATIONS - U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali yesterday gave the final green light for an oil-for-food arrangement with Iraq to come into effect, U.N. officials said.

U.N. spokesman Ahmad Fawzi said that Boutros-Ghali had submitted his final report on the deal to U.N. Security Council President Paolo Fulci.

The deal could be effective as of today at 05:01 GMT, he added.

Six Arab-Israelis Arrested for Aiding HAMAS

UMM EL-JAHM, ISRAEL - Israeli police arrested six Arab-Israelis yesterday for allegedly

funneling funds to the Palestinian Islamic movement HAMAS through an "orphans and prisoners" charity, officials said.

The six suspects were detained in this Arab town in northern Israel and will be brought to court for a custody hearing today, said Linda Menuchim, a spokeswoman for Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani.

She said the non-profit organization "orphans and prisoners" was suspected of channeling money to families of jailed or killed activists in the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), the main Palestinian movement opposed to peace accords with Israel.

PA Possess Anti-Tank Missiles

WASHINGTON, U.S.A. - Palestinian Authorities have acknowledged possessing dozens of anti-tank missiles, according to a report in Time magazine.

The Palestinians are forbidden from having such weapons according to the Oslo Accords reached with Israel, the magazine said.

Quoting Israeli intelligence reports, the magazine also said the Palestinians were working "around the clock" to obtain anti-aircraft missiles.

The magazine said that Palestinian security officials denied official involvement in weapons smuggling but acknowledged having the anti-tank missiles, which were confiscated from or donated by local Islamic militants.

Iraq and Jordan Continue Trade Talks

AMMAN, JORDAN - Jordanian Prime Minister Abdelkarim Kabariti held talks here yesterday with Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammed Mahdi on ways to develop their trade links, as Iraq prepared to implement a U.N. oil-for-food deal.

"The meeting centered on the development of relations between the two countries in the commercial field," Saleh told journalists after the talks.

The two men also discussed bilateral trade, reduced by Amman from \$400 million to \$220 million in January because of the accumulation of Iraqi debt, said Saleh.

of Principles and subsequent agreements and the principle of "land for peace."

Algabid had blamed the peace stalemate on the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for its "non-compliance" with previous deals.

"The Middle East peace process has been marking time since the ascension to power of the new government in Israel," he said.

Foreign ministers from the OIC's 53 member nations are attending the grouping's 24th annual ministerial meet.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Said al-Sahaf said the OIC has not been effective in assisting Iraqi efforts to have a five-year-old United Nations embargo lifted.

Asked whether the OIC had been helpful in Iraq's lobbying to have the U.N. sanctions lifted, Al-Sahaf said: "Not at all."

He said Iraq was relying more on the support of individual countries than the OIC as a whole.

WEATHER

Tehran Temperature			
Maximum	12°C		
Minimum	+04°C		
Partly cloudy with wind			
Temperature extremes till noon today			
High: Omidiyeh	27°C		
Low: Bojnourd	-06°C		
Temperature in some major cities of the world on Dec. 9, 1996			
Istanbul	09°C	Karachi	24°C
Delhi	18°C	Madrid	09°C
Kuwait	25°C	Vienna	02°C
Rome	10°C	Paris	01°C

Air Quality Control Company a subsidiary of Municipality of Tehran, which monitors the air quality in Tehran, announced: Wednesday ambient air quality expressed in terms of "Pollution Standard Index" (PSI) was categorized as hazardous (due to a high concentration of carbon monoxide).

"We have bilateral relations with friendly countries which have supported us," he said. "We have no specific demand from the OIC."

Also an Indonesian senior official said foreign ministers of the OIC yesterday ruled to keep the Afghan seat vacant in the face of rival claimants.

"The ministers adopted a decision ... to keep the Afghan chair vacant, without prejudice to the question of recognition of the government of Afghanistan," said Izhar Ibrahim, director general of political affairs at the Indonesian Foreign Ministry.

He said that the decision was effective only for the duration of the meeting.

"The conference does not take side with whichever sides ... there should not be any interpretation that there is a recognition of any of the parties," Ibrahim told a press briefing at the end of the first day of the five-day meeting of the 24th Islamic conference of foreign ministers.

Envoys from the two rival factions in Afghanistan, that of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani and that of the Taliban, have not been admitted to the proceedings of the conference here.

Iranian Armenians Reject Negative Propaganda of Foreign Media

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian Armenians on Sunday condemned the disinformation and negative propaganda spread by foreign media and some so-called human rights organizations regarding their status.

According to an IRNA report, the National and Cultural Association of Armenians of Tehran, said in its statement on the eve of the World Human Rights Day, that Iranian Armenians actively and

freely pursue their social and cultural activities without any restrictions.

"Iranian Armenians enjoy full freedom in their personal lives and religious affairs, as guaranteed by the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran", read part of the statement.

"This association, as a social entity, hereby condemns the idle prattle of global arrogance," concluded the statement.

Opposition Demonstrators Unite to Denounce President

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN (AFP) - Some 3,500 people took to the streets Sunday in the Kazakh capital Almaty to protest against President Nursultan Nazarbayev and economic hard times exacerbated by months without pay.

The authorized protest called by opposition parties and independent trade unions was the first aimed directly at Nazarbayev, who was a top official in Kazakhstan during the Soviet era, before 1991.

Protesters booed the approximately 150 police officers who were on hand for the event and shouted slogans against Nazarbayev, whom they called the "Head of the Bandits Governing Us." They also warned "remember what happened to Najibullah," Afghanistan's former Communist president who was killed in September by the Taliban militia there. "Step down on your own," they shouted.

they also tried to divert public attention from the deep-rooted differences existing among themselves.

Those who keep an eye on developments in the region understand that countries such as Qatar and Oman are no more ready to bow before dictatorial policies of Saudi Arabia.

We have seen Bahrain boycott the summit for the first time since the organization was formed in 1981, and its absence in Doha threatened the shaky unity of the alliance.

Anyway, such an irrational statement has no significance for Iran except that it was a chorus orchestrated by Washington for the creation of an atmosphere through which a big chunk of petrodollars could be channeled back to the United States for purchasing American weapons by Arab Sheikdoms.

ANALYSIS

Eye on Greater East Asia

"Myanmar Finds the Door Closed"



By: BEHZAD SHABANDEH, PH.D.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in an informal summit meeting in Jakarta barred Myanmar's entry into its seven-member body, tying it irrevocably to the admissions of Cambodia and Laos. The two Indo-Chinese states desperately need access to the ASEAN structure and had been convinced full membership was imminent.

The disappointment of two small countries counted less at Jakarta's one-day summit than the saving of face for ASEAN which had been pushing forward on Myanmar for months.

ASEAN leaders paid lip service to their commitment to admitting Myanmar, which Western nations and human rights groups argue would be tantamount to endorsing junta abuses, but backed away from setting a date.

This analyst has always been of the belief that the notion of "constructive engagement" within ASEAN is a positive and forward-looking orientation, and has bore fruit before. Admitting Myanmar would undoubtedly work toward SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council - the military junta in power since 1989) in a compromise approach, inevitably resulting in changes in Myanmar. Even though the preliminary changes will be of a cosmetic nature, they will pave the way for genuine change, though gradually initiated.

Myanmar's admission will create a breathing space for Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the Democratic League and eventually (not in a very distant future) bring her to center stage. The Nobel Peace Prize winner's strategy seems to be in tune with this policy, stating that confrontations with the military rulers will lead to junta becoming even more uncompromising.

ASEAN's "constructive engagement" formula has been successfully applied to involving the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the Southeast Asia region, thus leading to China's softer approach toward the Spratlys, which Beijing solely claims entitlement to. Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Indonesia are involved in China-ASEAN controversy over the Spratlys. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations forced China to deal collectively with ASEAN over the islands being disputed in the South China Sea. China's isolation was deemed detrimental toward the security of Southeast Asia, but engaging her has resulted in China being more receptive to ASEAN's demands.

Enforcing "The ASEAN Way," the mode of conduct in ASEAN - which emphasizes common interest, bypassing differences or putting them on a back-burner, postponing them for the future - will bear fruit on Myanmar. To absorb Myanmar, the security of the region will be enhanced (being in the common interest of all the ten nations of Southeast Asia), will involve Yangon in the AFTA (ASEAN Free Trade Area), and will contribute to the economy of all the countries. Myanmar's rich natural resources will act as an engine for further growth. Its abundant labor will enable labor-intensive industries to be relocated to Myanmar, laying foundations for further prosperity. Cash-strapped Myanmar needs the investments which will be forthcoming with the changes to be installed there, thus leading to a reorientation of its internal policies, etc.

Last but not least, the two small Indo-Chinese states must not suffer because of irregularities in Myanmar. ASEAN's meeting in Jakarta was a compromise and inadvertently indicated where the group's weaknesses lie - that is to succumb to Western pressure, which in this analyst's view will not lead to SLORC being forced to open up Myanmar's society. By keeping Yangon out, isolation takes place with all its negative effects on Myanmar's populace. And again, one must pay heed to what Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian premier, says of Western pressure to isolate Myanmar: "You can choose your friends but not your neighbors." Isolating Myanmar will have adverse effects on all Southeast Asia.



Major (L) and Irish premier Bruton

Major, Bruton Meet on Restarting Northern Ireland Peace Process

LONDON, ENGLAND (AFP) - Prime ministers John Major of Britain and John Bruton of Ireland met here yesterday to try to fire up stalled Northern Ireland peace talks, but large questions remained on if - and how - Sinn Fein might join.

Major set a stern tone for the talks with a warning Sunday that any new Irish Republican Army (IRA) cease-fire would have to be proven "genuine" and "sustainable" before Sinn Fein, the IRA's political voice, were allowed into talks that began last June.

Although the meeting here was to discuss European Union issues ahead of the EU summit in Dublin this weekend, Major made it clear in a television interview that Northern Ireland was high on the agenda.

And he indicated he was not optimistic for an early renewal of the 17-month cease-fire the IRA broke with a bombing campaign last February.

"I'm not going down a fake path again," said Major. "We've

done that and we were betrayed by Sinn Fein/IRA, who said one thing when they were doing another. This time it needs to be real."

But he also made clear that once a new cease-fire was declared, and he was satisfied it was legitimate, he would not drag his feet.

"I will not wait for too long to see if it is to be sustainable," he said.

"What I do not wish to see would be a phony cease-fire - a cease-fire simply to score public relations victories and to try and have Sinn Fein parachuted into the talks without actually giving up the violence which has sustained the IRA for so long," Major said. Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams dismissed the premier's remarks as containing "nothing new or positive."

As Major and Bruton met, a London newspaper, the Express, quoted sources close to the IRA as saying the IRA would not call its traditional Christmas truce this year, for the first time in 27 years.

More Than 150 Slain in Sierra Leone

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE (AFP) - More than 150 people were massacred at the weekend in two villages in northern Sierra Leone, less than 10 days after the government signed a peace accord with rebel forces, witnesses told journalists in the region yesterday.

The killings occurred in the Tonkolili district.

The signing of the peace accord on November 30 between Sierra Leonean President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and Foday Sankoh, the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), ended more than five years of civil war.

Since 1991, more than 10,000 people have died in fighting in the West African nation.

42 Drown in Ferry Capsize in Sudan

KHARTOUM, SUDAN (AFP) - Forty-two people drowned when a ferry capsized on Saturday in the Nile River north of here, an official newspaper said yesterday.

Five passengers managed to swim to safety following the accident near the town of Shendi, some 180 kilometers (111 miles) north of the Sudanese capital Khartoum, the official Al Engaz Al Watani daily said.

It said that 27 women were among the dead and that only 12 bodies had been recovered.

The newspaper said the ferry was carrying villagers to a religious celebration when it capsized.



ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN: Lebanese-born widow of slain Murtaza Bhutto (R), Ghinva, and Pakistani caretaker Prime Minister Malik Khalid (L) come out after a meeting Dec. 7. Ghinva, who arrived in Islamabad for the first time since the killing of her husband in a police shooting in Karachi Sept. 20, earlier told a news conference that she would run against deposed Premier Benazir Bhutto in the national elections scheduled to be held Feb. 3.

(AFP Photo)

Trade Ministers Mark Territory at WTO

SINGAPORE (AFP) - Wrangling over high-tech products, telecom services and labor standards dominated talks here yesterday as ministers from 127 nations kicked off the first-ever meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The week-long trade meeting comes two years after the birth of the WTO which followed the successful conclusion of the Uruguay round of global trade talks within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Charlene Barshefsky, the acting U.S. trade representative, said there had been "very good progress" on a proposed Information Technology Agreement (ITA), designed to eliminate tariffs on high-tech products by 2000.

But her deputy, Jeffrey Lang, warned that the effort could collapse if there was no compromise before the meeting ends Friday.

"We strongly feel that if we don't get an ITA here, there is a risk, a serious risk, that we may not get it at any other time. That is why we are pushing so hard to do it here," he said.

Barshefsky hailed "impressive offers" by Asian countries but said the so-called quadrilateral grouping of Canada, the European Union (EU), Japan and the United States had yet to resolve their differences.

Japan accused the EU of blocking the ITA proposal, covering an estimated \$600 billion a year in world trade, by insisting that it be linked to government procurement of such products.

"The main obstacle is the EU," a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said, denouncing the "delaying tactic" adopted by the Europeans. "It's not fair to try and make a

linkage with something else. It should not be allowed."

France meanwhile said Washington had to pay a price if it wanted an agreement in Singapore.

A top French official who asked not to be named said an accord was "impossible" unless Washington budged on other issues, citing unresolved problems over the list of items to be included in the deal.

Malaysia's Minister for International Trade and Industry Rafidah Aziz, a vocal critic of the ITA proposal, voiced opposition to the plan.

"We are not for a zero approach, nor are we for a deadline for the year 2000," she said. "We didn't come here to negotiate ITA."

On the more immediate issue of the looming February 15 deadline to conclude talks on basic telecommunications services, negotiators expressed confidence that they had inched closer to a compromise.

Talks to liberalize the market for services such as voice, data transfer, telegram and fax services - worth about \$550 billion a year - collapsed in April with Washington demanding better offers from Asian nations.

During a special meeting of ministers from about 35 countries involved in the telecom talks, Australia, Canada, South Korea and Singapore indicated they would soon be bringing improved offers to Geneva, sources said.

"The bottom line was that we think this was a very good meeting, very positive in tone," said Barshefsky, who chaired the two-hour talks. She said the meeting was a "building block" in the process of reaching an agreement.

Ghanaian President Leads Poll at Halfway Stage



RAWLINGS

ACCRA, GHANA (AFP) - President Jerry Rawlings had a comfortable lead yesterday over his nearest rival in Ghana's presidential election with just over half the constituencies reporting early results.

Provisional results from 102 of the 200 constituencies gave Rawlings 54 percent of the 3.4 million votes compared to 43 percent for John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party.

Zairean Rebels Claim to Have Captured Another Town

GOMA, ZAIRE (AFP) - Zairean rebels who control much of the east of the country said yesterday they had seized the town of Bunia near the border with Uganda, but admitted that government troops put up a hard fight.

"Bunia fell yesterday," the mainly Tutsi rebels' Security Chief, Paul Kabongo, told AFP.

"But there was resistance from the Zairean armed forces. They do not give up easily."

If confirmed, Bunia would be the northernmost town captured by the guerrillas, who have taken most of eastern Zaire since rising up against the Kinshasa government in October.

Back Peace Talks Resumed

Chair Arrives for EU Talks with Kohl

Handwritten text in Persian/Arabic script.

IRAN
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Tajik Peace Talks Postponed

DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN (AFP) - Peace talks due yesterday between Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov and an Islamic rebel military leader have been put back, possibly to today, a presidential spokesman said.

He said rebel Leader Said Abdullah Nuri could not get to the talks on time but the meeting, the third between the two men, could take place today.

A U.N. plane carrying Nuri was forced down by Taliban militia in western Afghanistan on Saturday and was only allowed to leave a day later.

Although it was originally headed for Kunduz, near the northern Afghan city of Taloqan where Nuri has his stronghold, Taliban sources said he diverted to Kandahar to meet their top Leader Mullah Mohammad Omar.

Nuri's plane was due to land in Kunduz yesterday.

However a U.N. spokesman in Tajikistan, quoted by Interfax news agency, said the plane had landed at Kandahar because of a technical problem and Nuri was still in the town early yesterday.

The meeting with Rakhmanov was due to clear the way for a new round of talks under the aegis of the United Nations before the two leaders would meet again late December.

Sources close to the talks said the cease-fire was also on the agenda. It was declared in September 1994 but has been repeatedly violated and renewed since then. Its latest expiry date is the end of December.

Meanwhile Interfax, quoting an informed Tajik Defense Ministry source, said the rebels on Sunday had seized Kalai-Hussein, near the eastern city of Tavildara, which is 200 kilometers (125 miles) east of Dushanbe.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's Taliban movement yesterday expressed support for Tajikistan's Islamic opposition but said there was "no special relationship" between the two.

The Taliban acting Minister for Information and Culture, Mullah Amir Khan Muttagi, told AFP the Taliban supported the struggle of oppressed groups for freedom and happiness, and the rights of the Tajik mujahideen.

Chirac Arrives for EU Talks with Kohl

NUREMBERG, GERMANY (AFP) - French President Jacques Chirac arrived at the Nuremberg Town Hall yesterday for a one-day summit with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl ahead of a European Union summit.

Chirac and Kohl are finalizing a joint initiative for the summit Friday and Saturday in Dublin in a bid to inject new life into the inter-governmental conference revising the Maastricht treaty and charting the future of the EU.

This will take the form of an open letter published in Nuremberg yesterday and addressed to the current EU President, Irish Premier John Bruton.

The initiative will above all deal with the fight against organized international crime, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said in an interview published yesterday.

Mass Student Protests Against Milosevic



BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA: Nearly 100,000 people demonstrate Dec. 7 on the streets of Belgrade in a new anti-government protest. Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic said that police and army would not intervene against protestors. (AFP Photo)

BELGRADE (AFP) - Tens of thousands of students marched through the streets of the Serbian capital Belgrade yesterday for the 21st day of mass protests, furious after the country's Supreme Court confirmed the annulment of opposition victories in local elections.

Some 40,000 students - the largest body of students yet to protest - gathered in the bitterly cold early afternoon to call for the ouster of President Slobodan Milosevic - a key figure in the international community's peace efforts in the region.

The students were applauded by people hanging out of their windows to show support for the protests, throwing the Confetti, balloons and paper planes that the demonstrators have used to symbolize the peaceful protests.

The students headed for the Belgrade police headquarters where they were to protest a vicious attack on one protester on Saturday.

Dejan Bulatovic, a 21-year-old student, was arrested Saturday after carrying an effigy of Milosevic dressed in prison garb. His mother told a radio station yesterday he had been severely beaten, sodomized and insulted because of the protests.

"He was insulted, they (police-men) pushed a rubber stick into his anus, they kicked him while he was lying down," his mother said after visiting him in jail.

"A political dialogue is essential," Zoran Djindjic, head of the Democratic Party (DS) told the daily Blic. "A political compromise is possible only if we hold round table talks designed to define the conditions of political life in Serbia," Djindjic said.

"The round table would be a dialogue between the authorities and the opposition," he went on, "not in a diplomatic form or bargaining, but a serious discussion about the political future of this country."

But Djindjic's new stand clashes with that of another major opposition figure, Vuk Draskovic, who insists that no compromise is possible and that Milosevic must resign or be forced out.

Draskovic told 50,000 demonstrators Sunday that the opposition's main goal was no longer recognition of the opposition electoral win but rather Milosevic's resignation.

Meanwhile, according to the latest report from Belgrade, opposition coalition together has decided to boycott the Federal Yugoslav Republic's Parliament which is due to open today in Belgrade, leading opposition figure Zoran Djindjic said yesterday.

Djindjic told the independent radio station B-92 that the coalition, which claimed to have won victory in local elections in some 15 out of 18 key towns, would boycott the federal parliament in order to protest the annulment of those victories.

Trial Fuels New Fears After Paris Blast

PARIS, FRANCE (AFP) - Security was tight yesterday for the opening of the trial of 34 suspected Islamic activists, less than a week after a bomb on a Paris commuter train killed four people.

The trial of a group of Muslim activists accused of backing a Mo-

roccan guerrilla group has further fueled fears of a new campaign of terror in the French capital.

There has been speculation the new attack, which raised the specter of a return of last summer's wave of violence in the French capital, was linked to the opening

of yesterday's trial.

The defendants, mostly of North African origin, are accused of establishing a terror network in France which was in particular behind an attack in Marrakesh in August 1994 which killed two Spanish tourists.



SRINAGAR, INDIA: Indian army soldiers carry the dead body of one of the foreign militants who was killed early Dec. 7 in a fierce shootout with the Indian army in the Himalayan state of Kashmir. Five Indian soldiers and six Islamic mercenaries were killed in the gun battle. (AFP Photo)

PGCC Summit Ends

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK
TEHRAN - (Dispatches) Arab leaders of Persian Gulf littoral states yesterday ended their summit without the participation of Bahrain who boycotted the meeting because of a dispute with Qatar.

In their final statement, the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council warned that Israel's refusal to honor its commitments will inevitably lead to a breakdown of the peace process and increases the chance of more violence in the region.

The ((PGCC) member states welcomed the beginning of UN's oil-for-food program which enables Baghdad to purchase food with a limited amount of oil revenue.

They also accused Tehran of purchasing too many weapons and called for the three Iranian islands to be handed over to the United Arab Emirates.

NATO Approves Plan for New Force in Bosnia

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM (AFP) - NATO ambassadors yesterday approved plans to replace the peacekeeping force in Bosnia with a smaller follow-up contingent starting on December 20, a NATO official said.

The official stressed that this approval is preliminary and that the new force will only be formalized once the U.N. Security Council gives the alliance a mandate to continue its mission in Bosnia.

Alliance foreign ministers will endorse the provisional approval at a meeting today and Wednesday at NATO headquarters here.

The new force, to be called SFOR, or Stabilization Force, will comprise 31,000 troops and have an 18-month mandate.

Romanian Premier Announces Government List

BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (AFP) - Prime Minister-designate Victor Ciorbea yesterday announced the Cabinet list he will present to Parliament, setting the stage for Romania's first conservative government in decades.

Ciorbea said he would probably submit the proposed Cabinet to the legislature today for a vote of confidence.

The new government comprises 27 ministers and state secretaries, mostly drawn from the Conservative Democratic Convention (CDR).

Permits to Preach in Egypt

CAIRO, EGYPT (AFP) - The Egyptian Parliament has passed legislation requiring Muslim clerics to obtain special permits from the Egyptian authorities to preach in mosques.

The bill was passed Saturday by Parliament and is widely seen here as a new effort by the authorities to clamp down on Muslim extremists in Egypt, government newspapers reported yesterday.

Violators will be fined 300 pounds (\$100) and sentenced to one month in jail, the daily said.

The World at a Glance



ANKARA, TURKEY - Border guards opened fire at Greek Cypriots who allegedly entered the Turkish-held north of the Cypriot capital and tore down a Turkish flag yesterday, the Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK said.

BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA - The opposition coalition together has decided to boycott the Federal Yugoslav Republic's Parliament which is due to open today in Belgrade, leading opposition figure Zoran Djindjic said yesterday.

MOSCOW, RUSSIA - Russian President Boris Yeltsin left his country house outside Moscow yesterday for another one further north where he will "complete his convalescence," the Kremlin press service was cited by news agencies as saying.

SEOUL, S. KOREA - A family of 16 North Koreans, and a policeman who helped them escape, flew to freedom here yesterday, ending a dramatic 45-day ordeal since they fled their hungry homeland.

(DISPATCHES)

Turkmenistan to Host U.N. Forum on Afghanistan

ASHKABAD, TURKMENISTAN (Reuters) - Turkmenistan will host a United Nations-sponsored forum in January focusing on aid to war-torn Afghanistan, the official Turkmen-press news agency said yesterday.

The conference will be held on January 21-22 in the desert nation's capital Ashkhabad, the agency said.

Afghanistan's political, social and economic problems are to be discussed by officials from several states including Russia and the United States. Representatives from major international lending institutions will also be present.

Kurdish Rebels Release Six Turkish Soldiers

ANKARA, TURKEY (AP) - Six Turkish soldiers who were captured by Kurdish rebels 16 months ago have been released and are back from Northern Iraq, where they had been held.

The soldiers were handed over unconditionally to Fethullah Erbas, a deputy from the ruling Islamic Welfare Party, at a Kurdish rebel base in Northern Iraq on Sunday, the daily Hurriyet reported yesterday.

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Iranian Prisoners
Choose Not to
Escape

OR to See Newspaper

Jordan Wants to Learn from Defeat
CHICAGO (AFP) - Michael Jordan vowed that the Chicago Bulls would remember the Miami Heat's celebrations after they handed the National Basketball Association champions their second loss of the season. Dan Majerle's three-pointer with less than two seconds left gave the Heat an 83-80 victory. They lead the Atlantic Division with a 15-5 record. "They wanted it more than we did," said Jordan. "We have to make sure that doesn't happen again. "It was evident the way they celebrated after the game what it really meant to them. We'll have that memory." Chicago lead the Central Division with a 17-2.

Sports Highlights

Iran Keep Slender Quarter-Final Hopes Alive

DUBAI (AFP) - Iran kept their slender Asian Cup quarter-final hopes alive here with a convincing 3-1 win over Thailand here on Sunday.

In what was a must win match for both sides, Iran did not find the Thai's pushover Saudi Arabia had three days ago when they crushed them 6-0.

In fact it was Thailand who nearly opened the scoring in the 20th minute when their mile-a-minute style was giving the Iranian defense and uncomfortable time.

Seconds after missing from ten yards out Worrawoot Srimaka got a second bite and rocketed a shot off the cross bar with Iranian keeper Nima Nakisa well beaten.

But a disciplined Iranian side slowly but surely began to impose themselves on the Thais, most of the problems coming from the Iranian midfielder Naeim Saadavi who was wrecking havoc with his runs down the wing.

As Thailand struggled, Iran got the goal that always looked like coming when Saadavi let fly from 25 yards out. The ball clipped the inside of the post and into the goal.

It was just reward for Saadavi who was a class above anyone else on the field.

Thailand continued to threaten on the break and four minutes before the break striker Natipong Sritong, taking a leaf out of Saadavi, tried one from 30 yards but the ball shaved the wrong side of the post.

In the 54th minute, a blunder by Thai defender Kritsada Piandit, when he lost control of the ball, allowed Mehrdad Minavand to put Iran two in front.

With the defense in disarray, Minavand cut across the front of the box before blasting past Thai keeper Nipon Malanont.

But Iran's third goal was their finest.

Striker Ali Daei, his head swathed in bandages after a bloody first half clash with defender Surachai Jirastrichote, collected the ball in the center of the area and as the Thai defense closed in he coolly picked his spot and slotted the ball past Nipon.

Five minutes from time Natipong pulled one back for Thailand. It was rich reward for a team that had shaken off its thrashing by the Saudis. Their final group match will be against Iran in three days.

Becker Outservices Ivanisevic

MUNICH, GERMANY (AP) - Boris Becker served with devastating efficiency against the most ferocious server in the game and beat Goran Ivanisevic in straight sets to win the most lucrative prize in tennis Sunday.

Riding the support of a partisan crowd of 10,000 in the city where he lives, Becker routed Ivanisevic 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in the final of the \$6 million Grand Slam Cup.

The victory earned Becker \$1.875 million. Ivanisevic had to settle for \$812,500.

"I felt good from the start, I returned well and I was getting serves in," Becker said. "I played amazing tennis, I didn't make any mistakes."



IRAN NEWS

SPORTS



LONDON: Arsenal's David Platt (left) and Derby's Darryl Powell in action during their Premier League match at Highbury in London Dec. 7.

(AFP Photo)

49ers Fall Prey to Panthers

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Carolina became the first National Football League team to clinch a playoff berth in their second year of existence on Sunday, at the expense of five-time Super Bowl champions San Francisco.

The Panthers defeated the 49ers 30-24, becoming the first team to beat San Francisco twice in the same season since Atlanta in 1991.

The young club had stunned San Francisco 23-7 in September.

Kerry Collins threw for 327 yards and three touchdowns, including a pair to Wesley Walls, as Carolina won their fourth straight. Their 10-4 record matches San Francisco's in the National Conference West, but they lead the Division by virtue of their two victories over the 49ers.

The 49ers also secured a playoff berth, thanks to Washington's loss at Tampa Bay. They wasted another good effort from quarterback Steve Young, who completed 27 of 41 passes for 391 yards with three touchdowns and two interceptions. San Francisco missed a chance to capture their 10th division crown in 11 years.

Young appeared to have San Francisco driving for a possible go-ahead score when former 49er Eric Davis intercepted a pass off the hands of receiver Terrell Owens at the Carolina 21 yard line with less than five minutes left.

The Green Bay packers clinched the NFC Central crown for the second straight year with a 41-6 rout of AFC West winners Denver.

The game was touted as a possible Super Bowl preview, but its interest was dimmed when the Broncos decided to have injured

quarterback John Elway sit out.

While Bill Musgrave made his first career NFL start in place of Elway, the packers relied on star quarterback Brett Favre, who passed for four touchdowns, including three to Antonio Freeman.

It was the fifth time this season Favre had passed for at least four touchdowns in a game.

Green Bay's defense did their part, holding Denver's Terrell Davis, the NFL's leading rusher with 1,437 yards this season, to 54 yards on 14 carries.

The Pittsburgh Steelers, last year's Super Bowl runners-up, clinched their third straight AFC Central title with a 16-3 victory over the San Diego Chargers.

Norm Johnson kicked three field goals and Mike Tomczak threw a touchdown pass for the Steelers, whose cause was helped by Jacksonville's 23-17 victory over Houston.

The Jaguars' Natrone Means, subbing for the injured James Stewart, ran for 67 yards and a pair of scores and Mike Hollis booted

three field goals as the Jaguars kept their slim playoff hopes alive.

Chicago also stayed in contention with a 35-9 win over the St. Louis Rams.

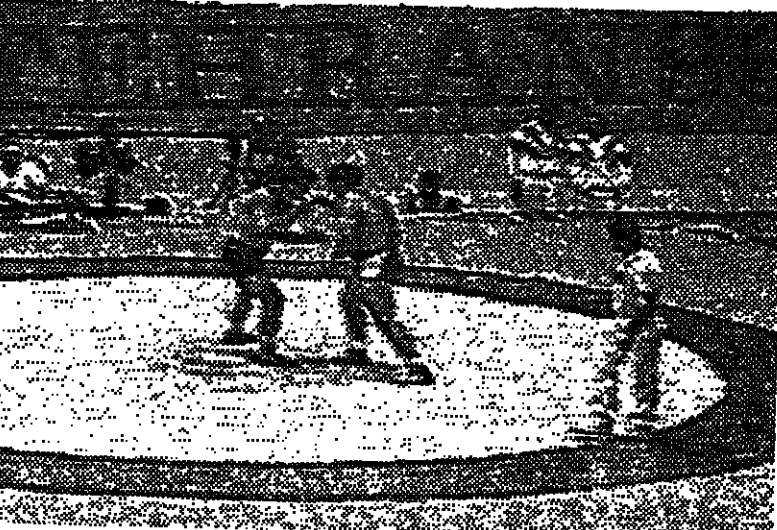
The reeling Redskins lost 24-10 at Tampa Bay. They have now lost five of six after winning seven in a row, and trail NFC East leaders Dallas by a game.

The Cowboys survived the loss of star defender Leon Lett, who was suspended during the week for a positive drug test, to beat Arizona 10-6.

But the reigning Super Bowl champions face a tough finish, hosting the AFC East-leading New England Patriots before traveling to Washington for a possible NFC East title showdown.

New England defeated the New York Jets 34-10 and lead the AFC East by one game over Buffalo, who fell 26-18 to Seattle.

In other games, New York defeated Miami 17-7, Atlanta defeated New Orleans 31-15 and Cincinnati beat Baltimore 21-14.



TEHRAN: Azadi Stadium, Second International Student's Wrestling Championships Dec. 5-13.

Andrews and Hulbert Earn One-Shot Victory

TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA (AFP) - The team of Donna Andrews and Mike Hulbert fired a final-round 68 on Sunday for a one-shot victory in the rain-shortened, \$1.5 million JC Penney Classic Golf Tournament. Andrews and Hulbert, who shared the lead with Pat Hurst and Scott McCarron entering Sunday's third round, finished with a 16-under total of 197 and split the \$375,000 first-prize. The tandem of reigning U.S. amateur champions Kelli Kuehne and 20-year-old Tiger Woods tied for second with Missie McGeorge and Joel Edwards on 15-under 198.

VOL. III. No. 624 TEHRAN Price 200 Riaks

Tuesday December 10, 1996, Azar 20, 1375, Rajab 28, 1417

Real Down Barcelona

PARIS (AFP) - Real Madrid underlined their authority in the Spanish title race when goals from Davor Suker and Mijatovic earned them a 2-0 home win Saturday over deadly rivals Barcelona.

Madrid dominated Bobby Robson's Catalan giants to send 106,000 'Madrilenos' into raptures in the jam-packed Santiago Bernabeu Stadium as they put four points between themselves and Barca.

Real now stand two points clear ahead of John Toshack's Deportivo la Coruna, who closed the gap with a Corentin Martins goal after just six minutes against Valencia. That result pushed Barcelona down to third.

Betis kept in the hunt in fourth spot with a 5-1 thrashing of Logrones, while reigning champions Atletico Madrid stand fifth following Sunday's 1-1 draw in Bilbao.

Spain virtually came to a halt to watch the Real-Barca clash on television and neutrals will have seen a real outfit show they are worthy table-toppers.

They dominated the first period with and could have scored after just seven minutes, as Raul Gonzalez Blanco sliced an early effort wide.

But concerted pressure had to bring a goal and Croatian international Suker duly provided it with a close range finish from a Roberto Carlos free-kick.

In the 48th minute, Montenegro's Mijatovic hammered a second on the counter-attack to kill off Barca's hopes.

Fabio Capello's real, who deposed Barcelona from top spot two weeks ago, are now unbeaten in 16 matches this season.

As a former AC Milan manager, Capello would have had one eye on his old charges Sunday as they attempted to emerge from the nightmare of their Champions' League exit in midweek to Rosenborg of Norway.

Current coach Arrigo Sacchi, in charge for the first time in the League since his return from managing the Italian national side, saw Milan rally to take three points with a 2-1 win over Udinese at the San Siro Stadium.

Substitute Dejan Savicevic and Stefano Eranio were both on target to cancel out a Giovanni Stroppa goal for the visitors.

Milan were down to 10 men for the last five minutes after Alessandro Costacurta was given his marching orders.

Vicenza's two-week spell as solo Serie A leaders ended Sunday as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Inter Milan.

That allowed Juventus to snatch a share of top spot by winning 1-0 at Sampdoria. Ciro Ferrara scored on 33 minutes for the European and world club champions from Zinedine Zidane's corner.

Vicenza had taken a 19th minute lead through midfielder Giampiero Maini.

کتابخانه ملی

Russia Confirms Firms Negotiating for Iraq Oil

GOA, INDIA (Reuters) - Russian Fuels and Energy Minister Pyotr Rodionov confirmed on Sunday Russian companies are negotiating to buy Iraqi crude under the U.N. oil-for-food plan which could see Iraqi oil on markets again as early as this week.

"Yes, we are going. We have negotiations," he told reporters after a meeting of oil producers and consumers in this Indian tourist resort state.

He declined to name the com-

panies and volumes involved.

Trade sources said last week that seven Russian firms, including giant producer and trader Lukoil, were negotiating to buy a combined 100,000 barrels a day (bpd) from Iraq.

At current prices Iraq would be allowed to sell some 500,000 bpd over the six months under a deal agreed with the United Nations last May. The agreement may be renewed after six months.

Persian Gulf States Agree on System to Classify Imports

DOHA (AFP) - Persian Gulf Arab states reached agreement Sunday on a system of classifying imports in a step toward their goal of a customs union, a (P)GCC official said.

(P)GCC states agreed to "divide imported products into three categories — tax exempt, essential or luxury — and agreed on classification criteria," (P)GCC Secretary General for Economic Affairs Saleh Abdullah Khleifi said.

He invited finance ministers from member countries, who met on the sidelines of the (P)GCC summit, "to continue their talks to agree on the customs duties" to

apply on each category, and "complete classification of products."

The (P)GCC states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have been trying to unify their customs rates, which vary between four percent and 20 percent, in order to set up a common market.

Bahrain staged an unprecedented boycott of this year's summit, because of a border dispute with host country Qatar. But a (Persian) Gulf official said Bahrain would be bound by resolutions adopted at the summit which ended on Monday.

U.K. Not to Join Flawed Single Currency



MAJOR

LONDON (Reuters) - Prime Minister John Major said on Sunday Britain would not join a European single currency if other nations do not fully meet the economic conditions for taking part.

But Major, under pressure from pro- and anti-Europeans in his ruling Conservative Party, made clear he would not abandon the government's "wait and see" policy on whether or not to join the planned European Economic and Monetary Union.

In an interview with BBC television interview, Major made clear that if other European nations were "fudging" the economic condition for entry into a single currency, then Britain would stay out.

"If they are fudging the criteria there would be no question of the U.K. joining," the prime minister

said. He refused to be drawn into answering the question of whether or not Britain would join the "first wave" of nations participating in the single currency in 1999.

He said Britain would remain part of the EU but would not be pulled along with it if he thought it were moving in the wrong direction.

It was important for Britain to remain in negotiations on a single currency if the country were to have any influence on such an important matter.

"Can you win a football match if you are not on the pitch," he said.

Major also stood by his finance minister, ruling out dismissing the pro-European Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke as demanded by some anti-European members of the Conservative Party.

"We will not lose the chancellor," Major said, praising Clarke's handling of the economy.

"The economy is very healthy indeed and getting stronger," Major said. "We will enter the gen-

eral election with the best economic prospects that any government has had for generations."

Samsung-Fokker Deal Almost Dead

SEOUL (AFP) - A Samsung deal to acquire Fokker NV is on the verge of collapse, as the Seoul government's efforts to nudge other South Korean firms into the controversial bid have been stonewalled, reports said Monday.

Hyundai, Daewoo and Korean Air have rebuffed a government proposal to join Samsung's takeover bid, citing unpromising business prospects, Yonhap news agency quoted industry sources and officials here as saying.

"We oppose the joint acquisition bid because the project is illogical, at least to us," an official at Hyundai Space Aircraft Corp. told AFP.

The deal has been delayed at

the request of the South Korean government since Dutch Economy Minister Hans Wijers in November suggested that other means of rescuing the bankrupt aircraft maker — such as liquidation — was inevitable.

Wijers blamed South Korean authorities, who want to launch an ambitious mid-sized passenger jet project through the joint acquisition of Fokker, "for deciding to involve other partners in the negotiations."

His remark followed a decision by shorts of Northern Ireland to withdraw from arrangements to make wings for Fokker, bringing Fokker's operations to a virtual halt.

Using Warehouse Receipts in Developing and Transition Economies

Part I

Richard Lacroix and Panos Warangis

Warehouse receipts provide an important addition to the store of negotiable instruments in a country's financial sector. They can be especially useful in developing and transition economies where new market instruments need to be created.

Warehouse receipts, negotiable instruments backed by the underlying commodities, are an integral part of the marketing

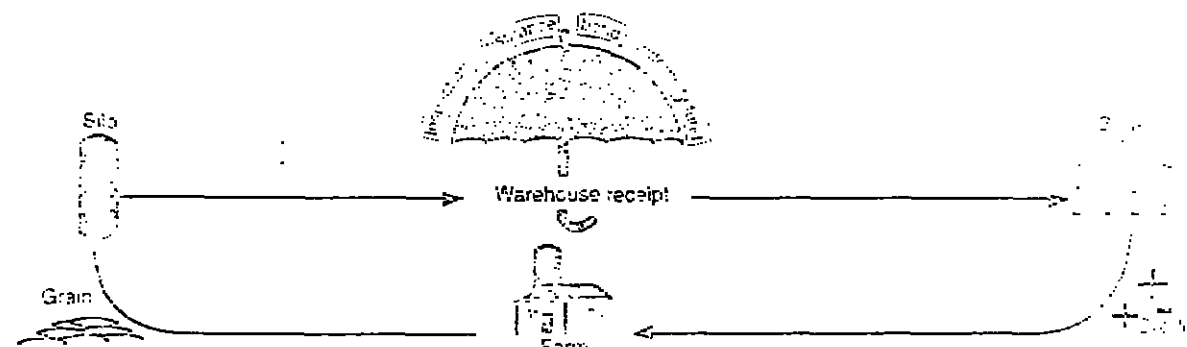
kets — usually by setting support prices that take insufficient account of price variations over time or in different regions to allow for profitable storage.

• lack of an appropriate legal, regulatory, and institutional environment to support a system of warehouse receipts; and

• limited, if any, familiarity of the country's commercial, including its banking, community with warehouse receipts.

governmental price supports are often structured in such a way that these expectations are not met. Rather, owing to governments' efforts to decrease price volatility and "stabilize markets," support prices are frequently fixed for most of the period between harvests and, on top of that, are set uniformly for the entire country. Moreover, real interest rates are often very high in developing and transition countries, making bor-

How a system of warehouse receipts works



and financial systems of most industrial countries (see box). The overall efficiency of markets, particularly in the agribusiness sector, is greatly enhanced when producers and commercial entities can convert inventories of agricultural raw materials or intermediary or finished products into a readily tradable device. Since warehouse receipts are negotiable instruments, they can be traded, sold, swapped, used as collateral to support borrowing, or accepted for delivery against a derivative instrument such as a futures contract. Unfortunately, the use of warehouse receipts is limited in many developing and transition countries because of institutional and structural shortcomings, among which the most prevalent are the following:

• lack of incentives for the development of a private storage industry owing to government intervention in agricultural mar-

Benefits

It is worth trying to overcome these constraints, since a well-functioning system of warehouse receipts has important economic benefits.

Warehouse receipts provide farmers with an instrument that will allow them to extend the sales period of modestly perishable products well beyond the harvesting season. When delivering the product to an accredited warehouse, the farmer obtains a warehouse receipt that can be used as collateral for short-term borrowing to obtain working capital. That way, the farmer does not need to sell the product immediately to ease cash constraints. Of course, this option will be attractive only if the farmer expects that seasonal price increases will make it worthwhile to store the product and sell it later. Unfortunately,

rowing against inventories infeasible. This occurs because it is unlikely that borrowing costs can be recouped through seasonal price increases, even in the absence of other price-dampening measures.

The availability of secure warehouse receipts may, however, allow owners of inventories to borrow abroad in currencies for which real interest rates are lower, particularly if loans are made against inventories of an export commodity, thereby hedging against the foreign exchange risk of foreign borrowing. This practice is followed in Kenya and Uganda, where coffee stocks are often financed in pounds sterling. Also, since high real interest rates are often linked to perceived risks, particularly when it concerns agriculture, secure warehouse receipts may reduce risk and lead to lower lending rates.

To be Continued

Emerging Economies Urged to Free Up Oil Markets

GOA, INDIA (Reuters) - Oil consuming and producing countries wrapped up three days of talks on Sunday with calls for energy-hungry emerging economies to help themselves by dismantling barriers to energy investment and trade.

All sides endorsed the need for stable prices, but any unfashionable talk of intervention in the market remained vague and out of tune with the prevailing laissez-faire philosophy.

And they remained divided over how to protect the environment without hampering economic growth.

Oil-thirsty Asia was in the spotlight at the gathering, the fifth such meeting since the 1991 Persian Gulf war oil price scare.

Crude oil prices are bubbling close to six year highs, cheering producers but leaving emerging economies sick over widening trade and budget deficits.

Rising energy import bills have severely hit countries like host India, creating a difficult choice of whether to pass international price increases on to their consumers.

"This is a dilemma for the entire developing world," Indian Foreign Minister Inder Gujral said.

But he added volatile prices can also cause headaches for producers, who are unsure when to invest or how much.

Two of the world's biggest oil exporters, Saudi Arabia and Iran, said supplies were assured for some time — if buyers can guarantee the right investment climate and market access.

Western consumers told their Asian counterparts they could only ensure supply security by opening markets to free competition and allowing more foreign investment in their energy sectors.

"As regards security of supply Asia can do a lot to help itself," said Britain's Junior Trade Minister Lord Fraser. "Those countries which retain state controls can give more freedom to the developing and strengthening of the market mechanism."

Consumers want stable, lower prices, but producers are happy with crude now at \$24.50 for benchmark North Sea Brent.

"If the prices are not right the investment will not flow," said Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Secretary-General Rilwanu Lukman.

"Ultimately you will end up with very low supplies and high demand and therefore prices will

shoot up, \$30-40 a barrel, and that would be even worse for countries like India."

While cheap new methods of extracting crude ensure world reserves won't run dry any time soon, concerns remain over the huge finances needed to bring new oil and gas fields onstream.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has estimated the cost of meeting the expected rise in world oil and gas demand by 2010 at \$1.7 trillion, or \$120 billion a year.

Delegates agreed on the need to develop reserves of cleaner-burning natural gas. However, while abundant, it is far tougher to transport than oil and involves massive expenditures.

Delegates also agreed to meet again next year in South Africa and to consider the formation of a world energy organization to collect data on demand and production and possibly coordinate a more unified global energy policy.

"Developing countries should not bear the excesses of the old polluting industrial order by curtailing their growth potential and energy demand," said Saudi Arabia's Deputy Minister of Petroleum Affairs Abdul Aziz bin Salman al Saud.

Economic Digest

KUWAIT - Kuwait will restore the capacity of the Shuaiba oil refinery to its pre-Persian Gulf war level of 195,000 barrels a day by mid-January, Al-Anba daily reported Sunday.

It quoted Riyadh al-Saleh, a senior executive of the state-owned Kuwait National Petroleum Co., as saying that the increase would raise Kuwait's refining capacity from its three plants to around 890,000 barrels a day. It is currently producing 852,000 barrels a day.

Al-Saleh said the company was planning to do more repairs on the refinery in July at the cost of 18 million dinars (\$60 million).

Kuwait's Mina al-Ahmedi Refinery processes 437,000 barrels a day, and the one in Mina Abdullah 255,000 barrels a day.

SAN'A - The American oil company Kerr-McGee Corp. signed an agreement with Yemen's Oil Ministry for prospecting rights in three fields in the eastern Hadramawt Province, the Al-Ayam newspaper said Sunday.

The company's budget for initial prospecting, which will start early next year, is \$30 million, the daily said.

An additional \$600 million will be spent for the development of the fields if oil is found, the paper said.

DUBAI - Yemen expects 301 billion riyals (\$2.5 billion) in revenues in 1997 compared to 156 billion riyals (\$1.3 billion) this year, Al-Hayat newspaper reported Sunday.

Yemen's 1997 budget, presented to parliament Saturday, projected a deficit of 13 billion riyals (\$108 million) for 1997, one half of this year's 26 billion riyals (\$216 million) shortfall, the London-based daily said.

Oil revenues were expected to reach over 190 billion riyals (\$1.6 billion) next year compared to this year's 73 billion riyals (\$608 million), the paper said.

More than 74 billion riyals (\$617 million) are put aside for subsidizing wheat, flour, electricity, water and some oil derivatives, Al-Hayat said.

AMMAN - Iraq's trade and industry minister reaffirmed Sunday that despite political tension, Iraq will give Jordan priority in trade under a U.N. oil-for-food deal.

"Despite all the difficulties and hard times, our relations will never be harmed," the minister, Mohammed Mehdi Saleh, told more than 50 Jordanian businessmen and government officials.

Saleh arrived here earlier Sunday from an Asian tour. He was scheduled to meet with Acting Trade Minister Nasser Lawzi before he returns home Monday.

Despite the strain, trade relations endured because Jordan depends on Iraq for all its daily requirements of 75,000 barrels of oil.

In return, Iraq received \$500 million worth of Jordanian food and medicine, exempt from sweeping U.N. sanctions imposed on Baghdad following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

MANAMA - Bahrain expects to produce 8 tons of fish next year from a marine culture project, Akhbar al-Khaleej daily reported Sunday.

DOHA - Residents in the six Arab Persian Gulf states consumed \$1.7 billion worth of soft drinks and mineral water last year, a trade survey said Sunday.

Today in History

1520 - Martin Luther publicly burns the Papal bull excommunicating him from Roman Catholic church.

1756 - Robert Clive takes Fulta, India, and relieves British fugitives.

1810 - Napoleon Bonaparte annexes northern Hanover, Bremen, Hamburg, Lauenburg and Lubeck, Germany.

1893 - Italians defeat Mahdists attacking Eritrea.

1898 - Treaty of Paris between United States and Spain, ending Spanish-American war, with Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines ceded to United States for 20 million dollars.

1899 - British forces are defeated at Stromberg, South Africa.

1936 - King Edward VIII of Britain abdicates, becoming Duke of Windsor.

1948 - UN General Assembly adopts convention of genocide and human rights.

1963 - Zanzibar becomes independent within the commonwealth.

1967 - World's first commercial thermonuclear blast takes place in New Mexico, to aid recovery of natural gas from underground deposits.

1989 - U.S. national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger conduct talks with Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping during unannounced one-day trip to Beijing.

1991 - Yugoslav federal army pulls out of Zagreb and Croatia and Serbia exchange hundreds of prisoners, but fighting continues elsewhere in Croatia.

Most Cases of Meningitis Respond Well to Antibiotics

BY DR. ALLAN BRUCKHEIM

QUESTION: The most disturbing news from our son is that our precious teenage granddaughter has come down with meningitis. She is doing well, but the condition's name alone is enough to strike fear in our old hearts, and we don't know how this happened. Where does one catch the disease, and how is it treated so successfully?

ANSWER: I can understand your concern and am happy to provide you with some information.

Meningitis is a painful swelling of the connective tissues that enclose the brain and spinal cord. It is caused by an infection, either bacterial or viral, and symptoms include an intense headache, fever, loss of appetite, intolerance to light and sound, neck and back stiffness, and rigidity of the hamstring muscles in the backs of the legs. In severe cases convulsions, vomiting and delirium may occur

and can even lead to death.

About 80 percent of all cases caused by bacteria can be the result of infection by one of three common bacteria. They are *N. meningitidis* (commonly called meningococcus), *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and *Hemophilus influenzae*. These bacteria abound in the environment around us, and such factors as age, head trauma and diseases that reduce the effectiveness of the body's immune system may influence which bacteria becomes the invading germ.

The infection is spread through small droplets of liquid in the air coming from the respiratory systems of infected persons who are in close contact, and is often spread by people who either display no symptoms or have only a sore throat.

Pneumococci meningitis is most common in adults, originating from infections in the sinuses, ears and respiratory tract. *H. influenzae*, the most prevalent form

of meningitis in children, tends to affect children age 6 months to 3 years and accounts for 50 percent of all meningitis cases. Middle ear infections are the primary culprit, and deafness may occur within 36 hours after symptoms begin.

A positive diagnosis for these forms of bacterial meningitis is usually made by studying samples of the patient's blood or spinal fluid, or both. Treatments with antibiotics are usually quite effective and, since the disease is so serious, are prescribed whenever the diagnosis is likely, without waiting for the exact identification of the specific type of bacteria.

Viral causes of meningitis (even though the symptoms may be the same) are much harder to manage. Unlike bacteria, which are simple one-cell organisms that reproduce by cell division and can be affected by a number of available antibiotics, viruses (which can only multiply inside the cells

See Page 13

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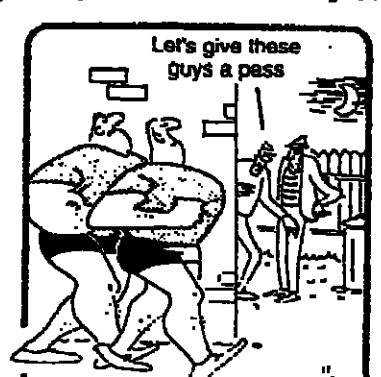
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Answer here: THEY WERE

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: YOUNG EMBER MANAGE ADJOIN
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GLADIOLUS ILLYRICUS Koch Family: Iridaceae



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HEATHCLIFF



"THIS A HIJACK?"

کتابخانه

IRAN
FEATURE NEWS

Test-Tube Babies Do Better at School

PRAGUE (AFP) - "Test-tube babies" tend to do better at school than those conceived by conventional means, because they are more wanted and more cosseted, a medical conference was told here.

The conclusions emerged from a study carried out on 422 children born after in vitro conception in the Antoine Beclere Hospital at Clamart, in the southern suburbs of Paris, and now aged between six and 13.

Rene Frydman, head of the hospital's gynecology and obstetrics department, told AFP that while physically the children were no different, "their parents look after them closely and this is reflected in

their school results: two percent are gifted, six percent are a year ahead, and 48.6 percent are top of their class."

France leads the world in test-tube baby production, accounting for a third of the 150,000 born since the technique had its first success with Britain's Louise Brown 18 years ago.

But Frydman said that parents of such babies were still reticent in telling their children how they had been conceived. Of the sample studied, more than half of those aged six to ten and a third of the 11-13-year-olds had been left in ignorance.

Frydman said that in France one

couple in every six seeks medical advice for infertility, which in 30 percent of cases lies with the woman, and 20 percent with the man.

In 40 percent the problem is low fertility shared by both, and in 10 percent there is no obvious cause.

But Frydman confirmed other findings that male infertility in Western Europe is on the rise.

Techniques have developed, with the direct injection of sperm into the ovary by microsurgery increasingly preferred over fertilization of eggs in the classic "test tube" for later implantation in the womb.

French Team Reveal "Major" Archaeological Find in Syria

LYON, FRANCE (AFP) - French archaeologists said earlier they had made a "major prehistoric discovery" in Syria which shed new light on the history and development of writing.

Three engraved stone tablets dating back more than 10,000 years were found in October on the banks of the Euphrates River at Jeft al-Ahmar.

The find was made at a spot where the remains of a village founded in the second half of the 10th millennium B.C. were uncovered seven years ago. A similar tablet was found in the 1995 in the same area.

The tablets, dated between 9000 and 8500 B.C. were engraved with "abstract signs and schematic figures" according to a statement from Lyon University's Middle East Research Department.

"These combinations of signs and recurring patterns, which are the expression of a symbolic language which remains to be decoded, could revolutionize the history of writing," said the text.

"Geometrical patterns and animal figures dating from this period were already known. The novelty of this discovery is in the association of schematic animal drawings and abstract signs in different groups, forming what looks like a text," the statement said.

"This discovery is important because at that time, we were still 5,000 years away from the first real writing," said Daniele Stordeur, a researcher with the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS).

"With these stones, it appears that people were already trying to communicate with signs," she said.

The stones, which were dated using a particle accelerator as well as the classic carbon 14 method, are currently preserved at a museum in Damascus.

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India - Home to the Queen's English and Lots More

NEW DELHI (AFP) - A perfect grasp of English may not get you very far in India, where 950 million people, 200 years of colonialism and an obsession with Shakespeare have done odd things to the language.

For the uninitiated, "backside" is not the human posterior nor that of any animal, but the backyard or rear entry to a building. It can also be a back alley.

The commonest graffiti on walls is "do not commit nuisance", while "nonsense" is a vile abuse in eastern India, and a ubiquitous message on the backs of trucks is "OK tata".

They are respectively a warning not to urinate, a local term for

status families - meaning domesticated and fair-complexioned women with an upper-class pedigree.

"Innocent divorcee" refers not to naive but an unconsummated marriage while "girl only consideration" - joy of joys - means the prospective groom's family does not want dowry.

Do not be taken aback by a "53-year-old boy" looking for a bride or a "teacheress" - a school-marm - looking for a soulmate. It is perfectly understandable and everybody has a right to wish for conjugal bliss.

While local variants can be puzzling, more than 200 years of British colonial rule and an obses-

most humbly beseech your honor.

The letter, almost invariably to a man, is addressed in the person's name, followed by esquire. If it is the rare woman, it is "respected madam".

Certain parts of Warren-like government buildings are sealed off to the public with a stern "no admission" (admittance) while in parks and public gardens notices warn picnickers not to "pluck" flowers.

Solicitous hosts ask guests: "is your belly full?" While polite conversation would include queries about digestion.

"I hope you had a good bowel movement" is popular and consid-



a conniving rascal and a friendly "take care and bye" to overtaking vehicles.

Newly-arrived expatriates are bewildered by newspaper headlines and local journalism, studded with "airdashed", meaning took the first available flight, "dharna" or sit-in protest and "pooh-pooh," frequently mistaken for an elegant way to describe a denial.

The matrimonial column, a voluminous section in weekend newspapers, where marriages are traditionally contracted between families, make for even more obtuse reading.

Adverts are placed for "homely, whitish" girls "from

sion with Shakespear, make for quaint situations. A senior New Delhi judge handling the corruption trial of former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, said during one hearing that "something is rotten in the state of Denmark."

The sentence from Shakespeare's Hamlet was simply a dig at the state of politics in India.

English, sometimes of the Victorian kind, is the official language linking 950 million people speaking more than 30 tongues.

High school English "crammers" advise students to sign off business letters with a "I remain, your most humble and obedient servant," after beginning with "I

ered quite proper.

Ignorance, contrary to the old adage, is not always bliss.

Tapan Raychoudhary, a professor of Indian history at Oxford University and a famed raconteur, wrote of a classmate who emerged crestfallen from an interview which would decide his entry into the civil service, one of the most coveted jobs here.

"We asked him what went wrong and he refused to answer," he wrote in the popular Bengali-language magazine "Desh" (nation). "After much prodding he said: 'I think I made a mistake when the interview board wanted to see my testimonials.'"

Archaeologists on Verge of Unraveling Heart Riddle

MELROSE, SCOTLAND (AFP) - After 667 years, archaeologists were on the verge of unraveling the mystery of Scotland's legendary king, Robert the Bruce.

The answer was sealed in a lead cylinder excavated recently from a shallow trench on the grounds of Melrose Abbey in this town in the borders region.

The 25-centimeter (10-inch) cylinder was discovered near a small metal plaque that reads: "an embalmed heart within a leaden casket supposed by many to be the heart of King Robert Bruce."

The original case bearing the heart was thought to have been dug up by archaeologists in 1921, then re-encased in a more modern container and reburied in an unmarked location.

"The cylinder feels heavy enough to contain another casket," said Doreen Grove of Historic

Scotland, the government agency that commissioned the dig here.

She said they were confident of establishing the authenticity of the original cylinder, whose details are well-recorded, and had no plans to open it and inspect the remains of the heart.

She said the outer cylinder would be opened under controlled conditions at an Edinburgh laboratory.

If the second cylinder is indeed inside, and it is authenticated, it will be stabilized to conserve it and then reburied at an undisclosed spot on the grounds of the abbey here, she said.

"If it is Robert the Bruce's heart, it would have huge significance in terms of Scotland's heritage and history, and this has generated a huge amount of public interest," said a spokesman for Historic Scotland.

"But in strict archaeological

terms its significance is less, because it has been up before and we knew it was at Melrose."

Robert the Bruce became king of Scotland in 1306, secured a famous victory over the English at Bannockburn in 1314, and led his country to full independence secured by the Treaty of Northampton in 1328.

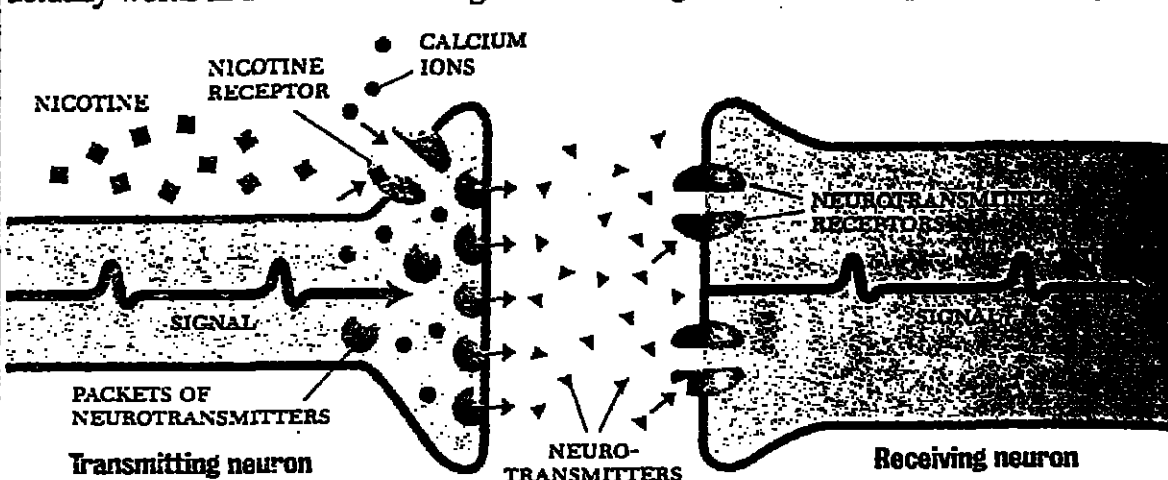
He instructed that his heart be buried at Melrose but while on his deathbed, according to legend, he asked a friend, Sir James Douglas, to take it instead to the crusades.

Sir James was on his way to fulfill the promise when he was killed fighting the Moors in Spain, and, still according to legend, hurled the heart-containing cylinder at the enemy as his final act.

The cylinder was supposed to have been retrieved, returned to Melrose and buried on the abbey grounds.

Smoke Gets in Your Neurons

Nicotine has long been known to improve recall. Now scientists have discovered how it actually works in the brain: it strengthens nerve signals and thus improves memory.



- 1 Nicotine binds to receptors on a transmitting neuron. This lets more calcium ions rush into the neuron.
- 2 The calcium triggers release of more neurotransmitters. They dock with receptors on the receiving neuron.
- 3 The docking makes the signal travel down the neuron, strengthening links between neurons and memories.

Memories Are Made of ...

... nicotine? New clues to how it affects the brain.

One by one, the "wonderful virtues of tobacco" (as a 1659 treatise put it) have gone up in, well, smoke. The belief that tobacco soothes the throat, cures colds and quenches thirst has been replaced with evidence that cigarettes can instead cause lung cancer, heart disease and early death. But one claimed benefit of tobacco is still standing: that tobacco - or, more precisely, nicotine - improves memory. Nicotine, at the levels circulating in a smoker's bloodstream after only a single cigarette, has long been known to increase recall in simple psychology tests. But no one knew exactly what nicotine was doing in the brain. Last week, John Dani and colleagues at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston claimed to have solved the mystery. Nicotine, they report in the journal *Nature*, strengthens communications between neurons in the hippocampus, a structure in the brain involved in learning and memory.

Nicotine seems to work by increasing the strength of messages zipping around the brain. These messages take the form of electrical impulses. As an impulse travels along a neuron, it eventually reaches the end. The next neuron lies across a gap, called a synapse. In order for the message to leap the synapse, it has to send an undelivered molecule that can diffuse across the gap. If enough of these molecules, called neurotransmitters, reach the neuron on the other side, they spark an electrical impulse in it, and the message continues on through the brain circuit. Nicotine, the Baylor team found, increases the amount of neurotransmitters released (discharge). That greatly increases the odds that the message will reach the neurons in a circuit change, becoming the physical embodiment of a memory. In fact, a 1991 study found that the risk of Alzheimer's disease is lower in smokers. Another study reported last week, by neurologists at Case Western Reserve University, found that nicotine seems to inhibit, in the test tube, formation of the plaques that gum up the brains

of Alzheimer's patients.

The problem with using nicotine as a memory aid, of course, is that "the delivery system contains 400 known carcinogens," as biologist Daniel McGehee of the University of Chicago puts it. But people at risk for Alzheimer's, or just forgetfulness, may not have to choose between cancer and senility. Last year a study found that nicotine delivered by a transdermal patch improves the performance of Alzheimer's patients on learning tests.

Both the hippocampus research and the Alzheimer's study were funded in part by tobacco money, from the Smokeless Tobacco Research Council and Philip Morris. At first blush, it seems that the tobacco industry would reap the benefits of reports about "good" nicotine. But in fact the discoveries, by pinpointing how nicotine acts in the brain, strengthen the argument that nicotine is a drug, and an addictive one. That is the conclusion the industry is working madly to avoid, since it threatens ever tighter government regulation.

Courtesy of Newsweek

Carbon Fibers Threaten Traditional Violin

MIRECOURT, FRANCE (AFP) - Italy's legendary violin makers of the 16th and 17th centuries must be turning in their graves at news of audacious experiments here to make the prestigious solo instrument out of composite carbon fibers in place of the traditional finely seasoned wood.

"It is a thoroughgoing revolution!" Enthused Alain Moinier, chairman of France's leading stringed instrument maker Chevalets Aubert.

The composite project is his idea, launched two years ago with help from the National Scientific Research Council and the aeronautics and space giant Aerospatiale.

Moinier expects the results to be as far-reaching as comparable changes were in the manufacture of guitars.

"We have a revolutionary new material and that will require a revolutionary shape," he said.

"We have been at work on the project for two years and are well ahead of the Japanese and Americans."

The shape of a 21st-century violin made of the composite material Kevlar is still a secret.

It is already known however it will be based on studies made over the past year by American Researcher Kenneth Rabin, head of research at Briey and a teacher in the architecture school at nearby Nancy north of here.

He and seven students, well aware as they put it that they were "committing an affront against absolute perfection," pored over the designs and details of violins worked out to produce fullness of tone by the master craftsmen of Cremona such as the Amati, Guarneri and Stradivari in the period 1596 - 1745.

Their successors here in eastern France made three Kevlar prototypes in the traditional shape and intend unveiling four completely new-style violins at music exhibitions in Paris and Frankfurt early next year.

The quartet will comprise an eighth, quarter, half and full-size instrument.

Until now, only the belly of the violin has been made of carbon fibers in experiments here and there. But Moinier intends the new model - it is unclear if it will even keep the name of violin - to be entirely of carbon fibers except for the bridge which will still be cut out of sycamore wood, the tailpiece in ebony and the fingerboard in lacquered wood.

His firm is world leader in manufacture of bridges for stringed instruments and exports 85 percent of its output.

He said tests behind screens had given excellent results which were monitored by a professional string player.

"The sound passes better through composite materials than through wood," Moinier said.

He did not expect a clash with ordinary instrument makers, since they would still be needed to string the violins and adjust the instruments to give them a personal tone.

Finally, "a carbon fiber violin will cost 50 percent less than a classical one," he forecast.

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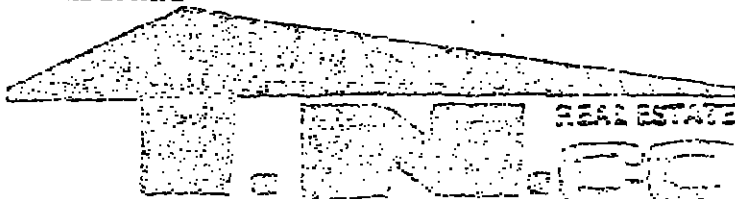
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Chinese Eager to See Picasso Gift

BEIJING (AFP) - A major modern art collection including four works by Pablo Picasso offered to China by a German tycoon is causing red faces in the corridors of the cultural establishment.

The "provocative" pieces in the 89 works left by chocolate tycoon Peter Ludwig have just gone on display at a time when the communist party is stepping up a campaign to stress ideological purity. And the Fine Arts Palace is not encouraging the public to visit.

Ludwig's gift was at first sight stunning. Estimates of 30 million dollars were put on the legacy by some at the Fine Arts Palace which is to manage the works. The sting in the tail was Ludwig's insistence that at least a quarter of his collection be displayed at any time.

Apart from paintings by Picasso, it has canvases by French artists Robert Combe and Herve Di Rosa, Germans Penk and Arno Rink, Italian Renato Guttuso, American William Bailey and the Cuban Tonal (A.E. Fernandez).

But the aim of the German collector, who died shortly before the paintings reached China, in acquainting the Chinese with modern art is unlikely to be realized to any great degree.

There has been little publicity for the first exhibition set to run for three months.

Fine Arts Palace officials maintain that the exhibition "is not meant for the public at large, but only for painters, students and enthusiasts. It was not worth extensive advertising, nor publication of a catalogue."

Some observers interpret the limited publicity for the collection as a form of censorship, especially at a time when the official media is harping on nationalist themes and the slogan of "spiritual civilization," exhorting artists and intellectuals to toe the official line.

Liu Qinghe, a young painter said of the collection: "The authorities have nothing to fear from these works because they contain neither sex nor politics."

Despite all the precautions taken to reduce a major event into a gathering of a chosen few, the halls of the Fine Arts Palace are reverberating with some rather unorthodox reflections.

"Modern art evokes popular forms of expression in China, whose aim is not to reproduce reality," said painter Yan Zhenze, contemplating the deconstructed face in one Picasso painting.

Liu Qinghe said: "In China, there have always been two forms of art, the popular and that of the educated classes. The first took recourse to forms of expression which are highly dynamic and free and is very close to modern art."

Yu Teng, a young woman who works in advertising, said she was struck by the works of German artist Jorg Immendorf. "Traditional Chinese art is no longer adapted to our cultural needs," she said, as she gazed on Immendorf's "Cafe Deutschland Gut."

"Since the start of economic reforms, the Chinese have felt the need to express a more personal vision of reality. Therefore, they have opened out to Western art," said Yan Zhenze, soon to exhibit his oil paintings for the third time in Hong Kong.

Stalker-96 Film Festival

GULAG Survivors on Jury for Best Human Rights Film

MOSCOW (AFP) - Russian authors and filmmakers who survived the GULAG are among jurors gathered here to choose the best film on human rights out of nearly 50 being screened at the Stalker-96 Festival.

The event this week takes its name from a cult film by the Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky, depicting an enclosed and desolate space which was at the same time a place both of perdition and of resurrection.

For the first time there are non-Russian entries among the 22 documentaries, 10 feature films and 12 animated cartoons on view, with a dozen countries taking part.

But the jury is all-Russian, and half its members served time in the GULAG (the Russian acronym for Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps).

"Violation of human rights, whether concerning religion, nationality or politics, is the theme of the festival," said jury chairman Valery Frid, a script writer.

He spent 10 years in the GULAG, when the NKVD, forerunner of the KGB secret police, accused him in 1944 of belonging to a group plotting the assassination of dictator Josef Stalin.

Many people connected with the cinema endured similar treatment.

It was Lenin, founder of the Soviet regime, who opined that of all art forms, cinema was the most important. The regime paid par-

ticular attention to practitioners of the "seventh art", used in Soviet days as an ideological weapon.

The official selection started off on Monday with Sergei Bondrov's "Prisoner of the Caucasus," based on a Tolstoy novella with additional input from the war in Chechnya.

The festival ends on Saturday with a Norwegian adaptation of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's "A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich."

Brecht Theater Boss Quits

BERLIN (AFP) - Martin Wuttke, director since January of the Berliner Ensemble, the theater founded by left-wing playwright Bertold Brecht, resigned late Wednesday, theater spokesman Michael Hintz said.

He said Wuttke, 33, quit because Berlin authorities had failed to guarantee the future of the theater beyond 1998 despite an ultimatum from him some weeks ago.

Berlin's state Parliament has decided to wait until the end of 1998 before revealing details of funding for all the city's theaters.

Wuttke, an actor, was appointed to head the theater on the death of Heiner Mueller. He had just been named actor of the year for his performance in Brecht's play "The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui," directed by Mueller.

the ground-breaking work on existence in the GULAG.

Another novelty this year is the inclusion of animated cartoons. The puppets of Estonia's Rao Heidmets are re-enacting the story of Pinocchio as a metaphor of an individual manipulated in a totalitarian society.

There is a 10-minute Azerbaijani tale of a cinema projectionist who recognizes his own former place of detention in a documentary he is showing of a World War II concentration camp.

"The basic aim of our show is to express moral support for people currently in prison," said Ivan Bamnikov, a leading organizer of the festival.

He himself spent six of his 32 years in prison, from 1986 to 1992, as a common law prisoner convicted for theft of state goods.

"I know what prison life is like," he said. "The inmates don't use their hearts any more, they freeze them up. News of our festival will be a signal to them that they are not forgotten."

The bow-tied former prisoner, sporting a swallow-tail coat, runs a relief agency called Freedom which stages concerts in prisons, organizes delivery of parcels and offers financial help.

"But when a woman leaves the cinema with tears in her eyes, it is much more significant, for that helps bring about a change in our society's attitudes towards criminals," Bamnikov said.

Exhibition of Tribal Art at Jamshidiye Gallery



IRAN NEWS ART DESK

Jamshidiye Park in north Tehran is the site of an exhibition of artifacts created by artists from Qashqai, Baseri, and Inanloo tribes living in the region around the Persepolis monuments. The exhibition, which will run through December 15, includes various types of carpets - gabbe, gelim, etc. - as well as items of embroidery. Visiting hours are 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Address: Jamshidiye Park, Jamshidiye Street, Niavaran Avenue.

Cologne Cathedral, Shinto Shrine Declared UN Heritage Sites

MERIDA, MEXICO (AP) - The bombed out skeleton of a building on the site of the Hiroshima bomb

blast was placed on a U.N. list of important cultural locations around the world - despite U.S.

objections.

The Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome was part of a list of sites approved Thursday at a U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), meeting in Mexico.

The list was authorized under the 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The United States had objected to the move, saying war-related sites were not part of the convention.

But U.S. State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said the dispute over the heritage sites between the U.S. and Japan "should not in any way overshadow everything that we agree upon our relationship."

The list designates areas of natural beauty and historical value that should be preserved for all humanity.

"The fact that the Atomic Bomb Dome has made the list is very significant, and it should be kept as a precious heritage as a witness of the tragedy of the first atomic bombing in the history of mankind," Hiroshima Mayor Takashi Hiraoka was quoted by the Kyodo News Agency as saying.

The dome in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park had been a government exhibition hall until the dropping of the bomb on Aug. 6, 1945. It was the only building in the area left untouched after the war.

Following is a list of new 30 heritage sites made public by UNESCO on Thursday at its 20th meeting here:

- Belize: Barrier Reef.
- Russia: Kamchatka volcanoes and Lake Baikal.
- Niger: West National Park
- Zaire: Okapi Fauna Reserve.

German: Bauhaus and its sites in Weimar and Dessau, Cologne Cathedral, Luther memorials in Eisleben and Wittenberg.

Armenia: Haghat Monastery.

Austria: Salzburg Historical Center and Schonbrunn Palace and Gardens.

China: Lushan National Park.

Czech Republic: Lednice Val-tice Cultural Alley.

Spain: Historical walled city of Cuenca and Lonja de la Seda de Valencia.

Finland: Old Verla factory for treatment of wood and cardboard.

France: Midi Channel.

Georgia: Svaneti Highlands.

Greece: Vergina Archaeological Site.

Holland: Amsterdam Defense Line.

Hungary: Millenary Benedictine Abbey at Phannonthalma and its natural surroundings.

Ireland: Skellig Michael monastic complex.

Italy: Del Monte Castle, the Trulli of Alberobello; Paleo-Christian monuments of Ravenna, and Pienza Historical Center.

Japan: Hiroshima's atomic bomb dome and the Shinto Shrine of Itsukushima.

Morocco: Old Ksour of Ouadan, Chinguetti, Tichitt and Oualata.

Mexico: Prehistorical sites at Uxmal, Puc, Kabah, Labna, Sayil, and Quetaro historical monuments.

China: Mt. Emei panoramic area, including the Leshan Giant Buddha.

Sweden: Lapland.

Italy: Vicenza City and the Paladio in Veneto.

Portugal: Oporto Historical Center.

Sweden: Gammelstad Church.

Exhibition of Children's Paintings

IRAN NEWS ART DESK

An exhibition of rural children's paintings and masks is on display at Sani-ol-Molk Gallery. Organized by Tehran Municipality (district 10) with the collaboration of UNICEF, the show includes paintings and masks prepared by rural children aged 2 - 6. The exhibition is scheduled to close on Friday December 20.

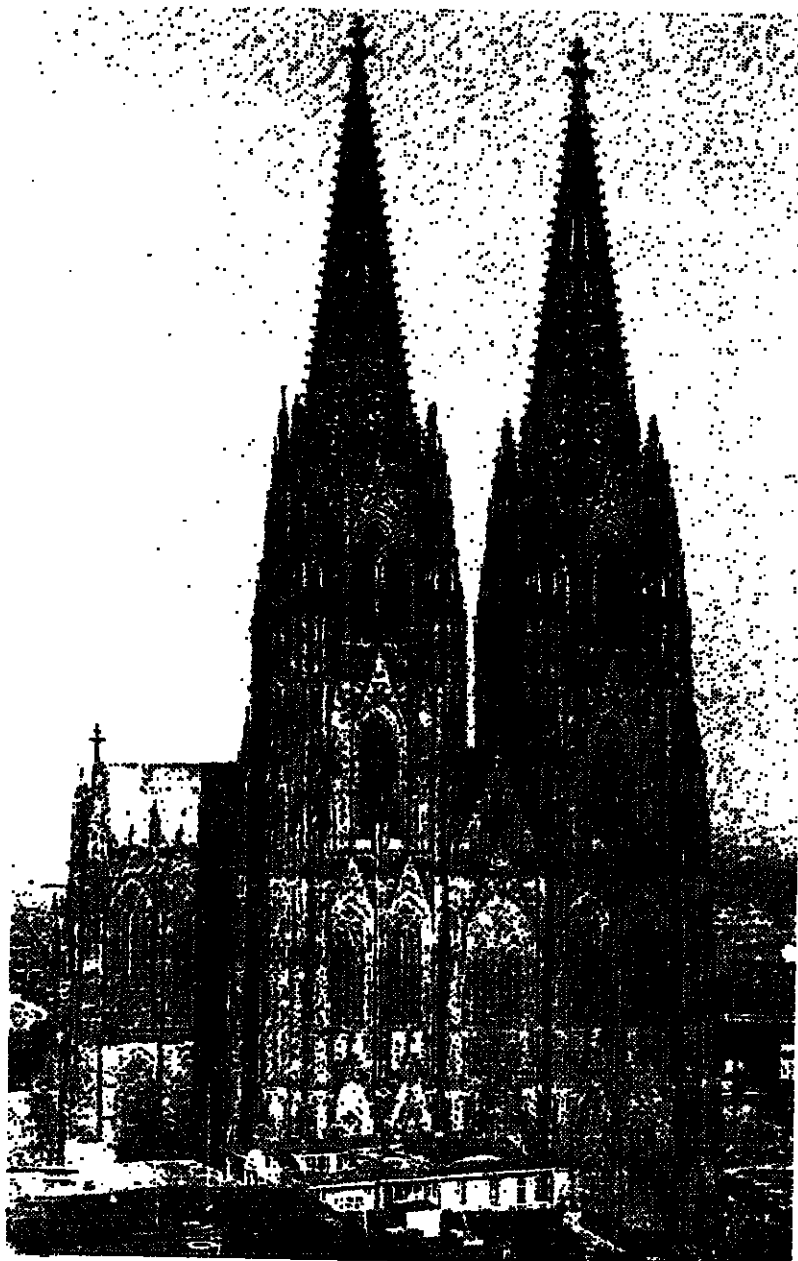
Valuable Painting Stolen From Prussian Palace

BERLIN (AP) - Thieves stole a valuable painting by 19th century artist Caspar David Friedrich by breaking into a Prussian palace where it hung and then eluding guards, police said Saturday.

Snatched in the pre-dawn break-in at Charlottenhof Palace in nearby Potsdam was the oil painting "View from a Harbor," said police, who put the value of the work at several million marks.

It is one of the best-known works of Friedrich, a romantic painter of landscapes.

Alarms were set off when thieves smashed a window at about 2 a.m. but the crooks escaped with the painting before security guards arrived, police said.



COLOGNE, GERMANY: (Files) Undated file picture shows the Gothic-era Cathedral of the city of Cologne. This famous landmark on Friday Dec. 6, was added to the UNESCO's World Heritage list.

(AFP Photo)

Handwritten text in Persian script: "کتابخانه ملی ایران" (National Library of Iran)

IRAN
POLITICAL NEWS

Vaezi Throws Light on Real Identity of 'Witness-C' of Mykonos Trial

TEHRAN (IRNA) - New light has been thrown by a senior Foreign Ministry official on one of the so-called witnesses to the weird procedures in the German court, where a politically-influenced prosecutor general leveled wild charges against the Islamic Republic and its sacred values.

To start with, on Thursday, September 17, 1992 when differences among anti-Islamic Republic groups outside Iran were at their height, two armed men entered the Mykonos restaurant in Berlin and pointed their guns to some persons at the restaurant and opened fire, killing secretary-general of the outlawed Kurdistan Democratic Party, Sadeq Sharafzadeh, and two other party members along with their interpreter.

To investigate the murder, Berlin Court took up the case and the first meeting in relation to the bloody incident in Mykonos was held on October 28, 1993.

After a while, the prosecutor general of the German court arrested four Lebanese and one Iranian as suspects in the murder case.

The arrest of an Iranian suspect among the group provided ground for the enemies of the Islamic Revolution to bring up new claims with the idea of pressuring Islamic Iran.

The impeached president of Iran, Abolhasan Banisadr, who had fled Iran to France on a hijacked airplane in 1981, reported to the court as a witness accusing the Islamic Republic of having been behind the incident.

Banisadr's claims were so unfounded that even the court said that his statements as a witness could not be adduced.

After this scandal, Banisadr said that he had learned his information from a 'knowledgeable' person who for security reasons was not willing to personally report to the court.

Eventually, in a highly intriguing manner accompanied by biased propaganda, a mysterious person dubbed as 'witness-C' entered the court to approve Banisadr's statement.

'Witness-C', with the assistance of influential anti-Iranian forces, managed to deceive the German court introducing himself as a ranking official of the Information Ministry of Iran who had sought asylum abroad due to differences of outlook.



VAEZI

The questions which naturally arise: Who is the mysterious witness-C? Why, on what purpose and by which forces is he being directed?

Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran for Euro-American Affairs, Mahmoud Vaezi, offered IRNA new information on the real identity of witness-C.

He identified witness-C as Abol-Qasem Mesbahi also known as Farhad, who after completing high school studies in Iran departed for France and during his stay there established connections with an intelligence gathering system and was employed by it.

"After completion of his studies witness-C returned to Iran and with the idea of penetrating local organs he made an effort to seek employment with them, but his capacity for working with those

organs was denied," disclosed the Iranian deputy foreign minister.

After that failure, he said, Mesbahi entered business activities, and because of questionable identity and an unstable character he forged titles for himself and gradually developed into a professional fraud, and eventually as the result of follow-ups by his creditors he was finally banned from leaving Iran.

Vaezi added: "Finally, witness-C left Iran illegally, and in order to get asylum in the West, he collaborated with the intelligence services of the United States, Belgium, Britain, and France."

IRNA's reporter asked Vaezi how Mesbahi had established contacts with Banisadr?

The deputy foreign minister replied: "With respect to the connections Banisadr has with foreign intelligence services, Mesbahi became acquainted with him through the same services and due to these connections and in exchange for money, he offered Banisadr and the information services false information. On the basis of this same background Banisadr was invited to Berlin Court and introduced Abol-Qasem Mesbahi as a witness."

Vaezi added: "Complete information has been provided to the German Foreign Ministry about the biography of witness-C, his past illegal activities, his records in Iran and in sum his real identity."

He added: We hope this information will be able to clarify the identity of this person."

The Iranian Foreign Ministry official concluded: "From the beginning of the Berlin trial, the Islamic Republic has always stressed that if this court investigates the file far from political insinuations and within the framework of legal and judicial issues certainly the result of investigation will prove the contrary of all vague claims and unfounded accusations against Islamic Iran."

U.N. Chief Says Peace, Development Depend on Human Rights

TEHRAN, (United Nations Information Center) - Stating that basic rights were at the center of the United Nations' concerns, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says that peace and development could not be achieved in the absence of human rights.

In a message on the occasion of Human Rights Day on December 10 1996, he called for promoting the global cause of freedom and in furthering the United Nations goals of a more open, tolerant and harmonious world.

The secretary-general said, "On this Human Rights Day, the international community rededicates itself to the universal goal of defending fundamental freedoms and promoting basic human rights wherever they are threatened. We re-emphasize that human rights constitute one of the basic pillars of the Charter of the United Nations and of the civilized order that it enshrines."

"Peace, human rights, democracy and development are the daily work of the United Nations. All around the world, the United Nations is working hard to prevent and resolve conflict, and to offer countless millions new hope for a better and more peaceful future."

"Peace and development cannot be achieved in the absence of basic human rights. The right to life, freedom from ill-treatment and

torture, equality before the law, and freedom of expression are all fragile freedoms which require constant protection and vigilance."

Equally, lasting and meaningful development requires a commitment to upholding fundamental economic and social rights such as the right to food, shelter, work, education and healthcare."

"The United Nations has worked hard over the last fifty years to lay down precise international human rights standards, to create ways and means of improving respect for human rights within member states, and, where necessary, to intervene to protect victims of human rights abuses and violations. Countless groups and thousands of individuals have turned to the United Nations human rights bodies for recourse against discrimination, torture, executions, disappearances, arbitrary detention and religious intolerance. And every year, member states receive vital technical and educational human rights assistance."

"Human rights are at the very

center of the concerns of the world organization. But success does not depend on the United Nations alone. It depends on everyone of us being conscious of and demanding respect for our human rights and for those of others. It depends on our speaking out for the freedom and well-being of our fellow human beings. Above all, success depends on a renewed commitment and action in defense of human rights at the international and national levels."

The preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights rightly tells us that every individual and every institution of society must strive, through teaching and education, to promote respect for human rights and freedom and to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance. This is an obligation we all share. It is in that spirit that I invite each one of you to play an active part in promoting the global cause of freedom and in furthering the United Nations goals of a more open, tolerant and harmonious world."

BEIJING, CHINA (IRNA) - Glorious ceremonies were held here at the Iranian Embassy on Sunday on the occasion of the feast of Mab'ath, which marks the anniversary of Prophet Mohammad's (SAWA) assignment to prophethood.

Preachers lectured on Prophet Mohammad's (SAWA) mission and on the need for unity of word among Muslims at the ceremonies, which was attended by Iranians residing in China.

Iran's Ambassador to China Hossein Mirfakhhar said in his speech that Prophet of Islam had brought science in the land of ignorance and saved justice under the conditions, when darkness prevailed.

In related news from Rome, Italy, there were similar ceremonies at Iran's Cultural House on the occasion, where one of the instructors of Qom Seminary Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, addressing a large number of Iranians residing in Italy, dwelt on the philosophy of God's descending messengers, especially on the importance of Prophet Mohammad's assignment to prophethood under conditions when ignorance was prevailing.

In Paris, France, Iranian Ambassador to Paris Hamid Asefi featured in his speech at Iran's consulate office in Paris on Sunday on the personality of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) and on the auspicious occasion.

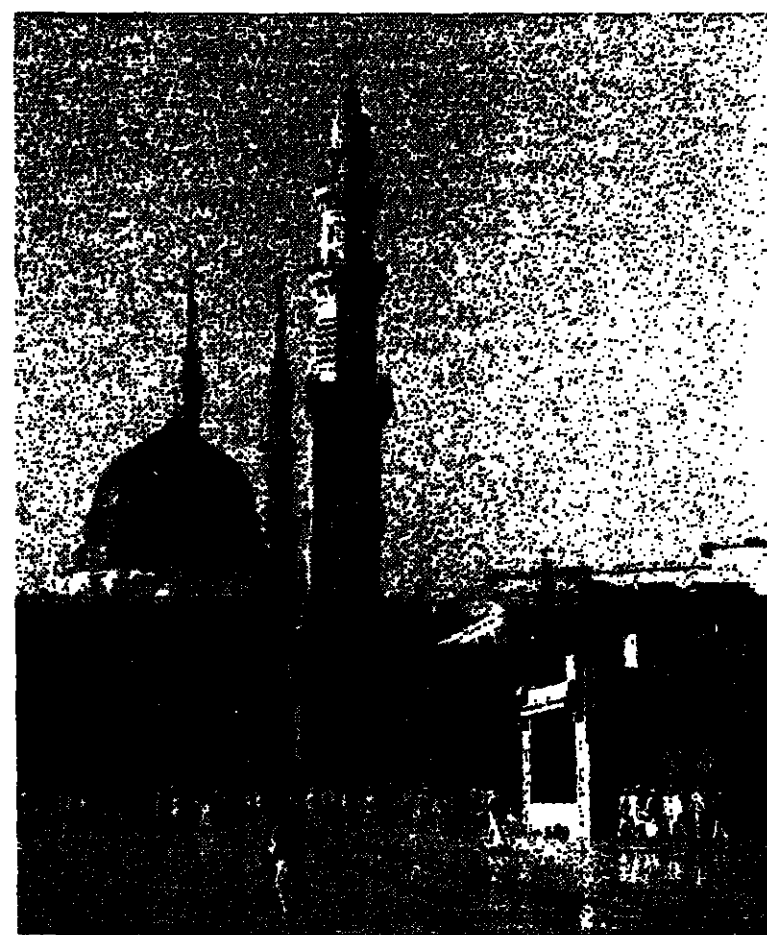
In Moscow, there were hundreds of Muslims residing in Moscow, including the Iranians, who had gathered at Khatamolanbia mosque to mark the occasion.

The speakers at the ceremony threw light on various aspects of the life of the messenger of Allah, and on the timeless wisdom of the Holy Quran that was revealed to him as the most consummate set of rules for humanity.

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Mab'ath Anniversary Celebrated Worldwide



A scene from Masjid ul-Nabi in Medina.

(Photo by Moradi)

Poets also recited eulogies in praise of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) at the gathering which was attended by hundreds of Russian Muslims besides the Iranian residents in Moscow.

At the end of the ceremony

prizes were distributed among those who recited by heart the last of the 30 parts into which the Holy Quran has been divided for purposes of reading.

Those well-versed in the life of the Prophet also received prizes.

U.S. Wants Afghan Conflict to Continue, Akhondzadeh

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN (IRNA) - The U.S. wants to see continuation of the present fluid situation in Afghanistan which could create severe problems both for Pakistan and Iran.

This was stated by the Iranian Ambassador in Pakistan Mehdi Akhondzadeh Saturday evening.

"The U.S. administration has failed to give a positive response toward the Afghan dispute. We are really doubtful that the Americans can play any positive role in resolving the Afghan imbroglio," Akhondzadeh said talking to newsmen in Peshawar.

He said, "The Afghans were just strangers for the Americans and the latter were least interested to help the former come out of the present turmoil."

"Only Pakistan and Iran can facilitate the resolving of the Afghan crisis as they share common borders, history, culture, language and above all common interests which are vital for stability in the region," the ambassador said.

He said the U.S. intention toward Afghanistan had been doubtful and Tehran believed that Washington could hardly demonstrate any positive attitude which could be beneficial for the Afghans.

Akhondzadeh said that Pakistan and Iran enjoy very cordial relations and expressed the hope that the two countries would take joint steps to further consolidate mutual ties.

He dispelled the impression that there were any differences between Islamabad and Tehran on any issue including Afghanistan.

He said that one of the ministers in the deposed Prime Minister Bhutto's government had an open involvement in the Afghan affairs which reflected that the minister had been very instrumental in the internal situation of Afghanistan.

But despite that relations be-

tween Pakistan and Iran remained strong and friendly as in the past, the ambassador said.

He said that Tehran was not opposed to the student militia of Taliban and wanted to see a broad-based government in the war-ravaged Afghanistan, including the Taliban.

"A government comprising all the ethnic and linguistic groups is the only solution," he stated.

Taiwan Rejects Chinese Conditions to Resume Talks, Saying It Can Wait

TAIPEI, TAIWAN (AFP) - Senior officials in Taiwan yesterday rejected conditions set by China for the resumption of talks as "unreasonable" and said they were prepared to wait for better terms.

"The Chinese Communists' demands are unreasonable, and it would be unlikely that we would accept them," Shi Hwei-You, vice chairman of the Cabinet-level Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), told members of Parliament here.

He was referring to conditions set by China for resumption of cross-strait talks - that Taiwan halt its bid to join the United Nations, its leader stops visiting countries that recognize Beijing, that it stops buying advance foreign arms and that it not lobby other nations to recognize both Taipei and Beijing.

The conditions were publicized Sunday through the Beijing-backed Hong Kong Wen Wei Po newspaper, which quoted an authoritative Chinese source.

Beijing suspended semi-official talks with Taipei shortly after Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui's private visit to the United States in mid-1995.

China, which has viewed Taiwan as a rebel province since the

Iran Has Essential Role in Regional Equations, Polish Journalists

BONN, GERMANY (IRNA) - Journalists from widely circulated papers of Poland in a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Warsaw, Mohammad Taheri said Iran, with its lofty culture and civilization, has a great role to play in the region's political equations.

The editors in chief and directors of political departments of Polish dailies pointed to the effective presence of Iran in the former Soviet states and in helping resolve regional crises such as the Tajik and Karabakh problems.

They also pointed out that Islamic Iran has proved its hospitality by accommodating a large number of refugees. They recalled Iran's excellent hospitality to Polish refugees during World War II.

At the meeting, the Iranian ambassador briefed the Polish journalists on the latest developments in the country.

Taheri, contrasting the turmoil in several neighboring countries, underscored Iran's effective role in regional equations as a "stable country in an unstable region."

The Polish journalists also visited an exhibition of Polish-language books printed in Iran and Iranian English-language newspapers on display at the embassy.

WOMEN in society



NATEQ-NOURI:

No Limits for Muslim Women Social Activities

TEHRAN (IRNA) - There are no limits for activities of Muslim women in various political and social scenes, said Iranian Majlis Speaker, Hajj Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, on Sunday.

Speaking to women parliamentarians from seven Islamic countries, Nateq-Nouri said that the human history had always been witness to discrimination, particularly against women, and "this is true, even today, in the countries claiming to be defenders of human rights, which when it comes to women, regard them as mere commercial commodity."

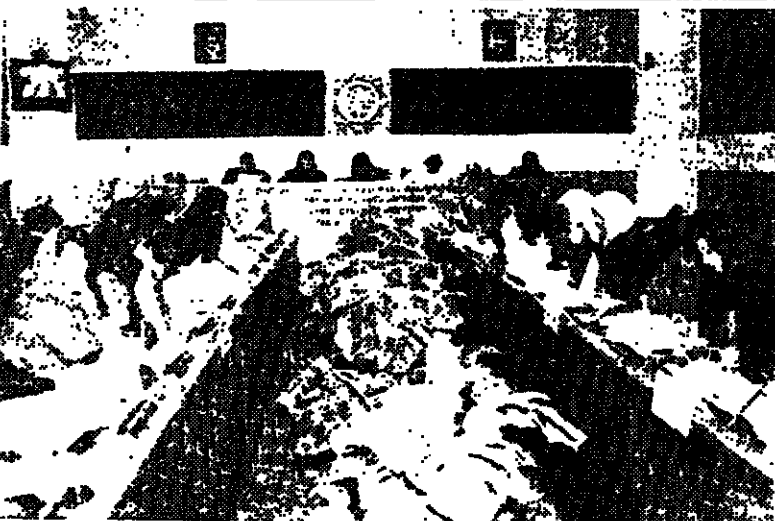
Pointing to the Quranic verses on women's rights and obligations, he stressed "there are no limits for activities of Muslim

women in the social and political fields."

He added it was regrettable that in some countries women were deprived of their Islamic rights in the name of Islam.

The Prophet's (S) wife, Hazrat Khadija (SA), and his daughter, Hazrat Fatima Zahra (SA), present the best examples for women social activities, said Nateq-Nouri to the women parliamentarians who are in Tehran to attend the first meeting of the Central Council of the Islamic Women Parliamentarians' Organization.

Nateq-Nouri stressed that women should actively participate in international forums "as representatives of half of the world's population," to defend their justified rights.



Muslim Women MPs Wind up Tehran Meet

IRAN NEWS WOMEN'S DESK

TEHRAN - The first meeting of the Central Council of the Islamic Women Parliamentarians' Organization wound up here yesterday.

The three-day meeting was attended by women parliamentarians from Iran and seven other Islamic countries, namely Syria, Uganda, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Azerbaijan and Sudan.

About the foundation of the organization, an Iranian MP Dr. Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi told IRAN NEWS, "The Islamic Women Parliamentarians' Organization was established three years ago with an aim to eradicate the problems of Islamic women



VAHID-DASTJERDI and to exchange views among Muslim women MPs."

"The first congress of the organization was held in Pakistan and the second in Malaysia. During the Malaysia's assembly, Iran was elected vice-chairman of the

See Page 13

Women Feed the World

Women play a decisive role in household and national food security. In rural areas - home to the majority of the world's hungry - they grow most of the crops for domestic consumption and are primarily responsible for preparing, storing and processing food. They also handle livestock, gather food, fodder and fuelwood and manage the domestic water supply. In addition, they provide most of the labor for post-harvest activities. Yet women's work often goes unrecognized, and they lack the leverage necessary to gain access to resources, training and finance.

How Women Influence Food Security

On a global scale, women produce more than half of all the food that is grown. In sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, they produce up to 80 percent of basic foodstuffs. In Asia, they provide from 50 to 90 percent of the labor for rice cultivation. And in South-east Asia and the Pacific as well as Latin America, women's home gardens represent some of the most complex agricultural systems known.

Women in the rural areas are almost exclusively responsible for the nutrition of their children, from gestation through weaning and throughout the critical period of growth. In addition, they are the principal food producers and prepares for the rest of the family. In general, most of this food comes from home gardens or from family and community plots. But it has been found that women also spend a significant part of their household income - a much larger part proportionately than men - on buying additional food for the family.

Food preparation involves work far beyond caring for crops and livestock. Women must gather the wood for fires and carry the water they need for cooking and processing food. In many regions of the world, women spend up to five hours per day collecting fuelwood and water and up to four hours preparing food. In addition rural women provide most of the labor for farming, from soil prepa-

ration to harvest. After the harvest, they are almost entirely responsible for operations such as storage, handling, stocking, marketing and processing.

As more and more men migrate from rural areas in search of work, women bear a heavier burden. In some regions of Africa, 60 percent of households are now headed by women. The expanded workload can prompt women to cultivate less labor-intensive - though less nutritious - crops and to use agricultural practices that may harm the environment.

Women also play a crucial role as custodians of genetic diversity and related knowledge on varieties and their uses, be it for food, medicine or cultural or other applications. From generation to generation, they pass on this vital knowledge to their daughters.

Invisibility and Gender Bias

Despite their contribution to food security, women tend to be "invisible" actors in development. As a result, their contribution is poorly understood and often underestimated. There are many reasons for this. Work in the household is often considered to be part of a woman's duties as wife and mother, rather than an occupation to be accounted for in the national economy.

Outside of the household, a great deal of rural women's labor - whether regular or seasonal - goes unpaid and is, therefore, rarely taken into account in official statistics.

In most countries, women do not own the land they cultivate. When land is owned by women, it tends to be smaller, less valuable plots that are also overlooked in statistics.

Furthermore, women are usually responsible for the food crops destined for immediate consumption by the household, that is, for subsistence crops rather than cash

crops.

Also, when data is collected for national statistics, gender is often ignored or the data is biased in the sense that it is collected only from males, who are assumed to be the heads of households.

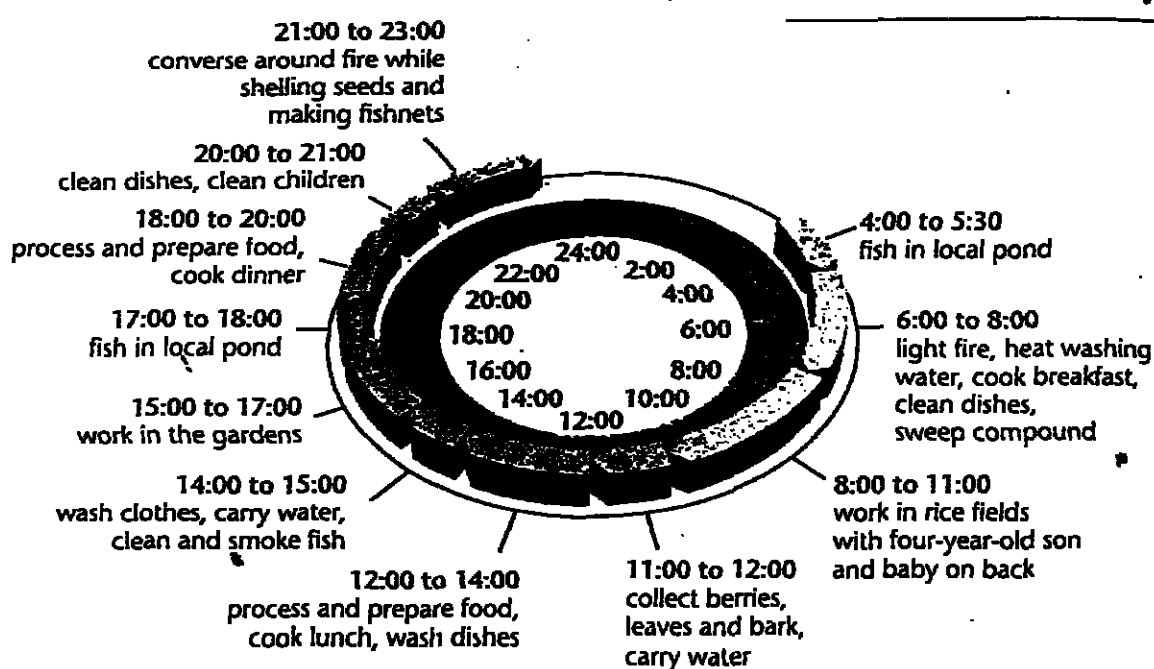
Rural women's invisibility is further accentuated by their lack of political power and social representation resulting from prevailing attitudes, gender-biased legal and social structures and illiteracy, among other factors. Extension services reach women much less frequently than they do men. Statistics indicate that women receive no more than 5 percent of extension resources. This lack of knowledge often hinders the progress of women and their contribution to food security, particularly at the family level.

The combined effect of these handicaps is an increasing feminization of poverty. Since the 1970s, the number of women living below the poverty line has increased by 50 percent, in comparison with 30 percent for their male counterparts. More than 70 percent of the 1300 million poor people today are women.

Improving Food Security by Empowering Women

Education can play a major role in improving the status of women, the nutrition of their families and national food production. A cost-benefit analysis carried out by the World Bank indicates that investment in the education of females has the highest rate of return of any possible type of investment in developing nations. It results in higher productivity, reduced fertility, reduced child morbidity and mortality rates and increased application of environmental protection measures. In the state of Kerala, India, a long-standing commitment to the

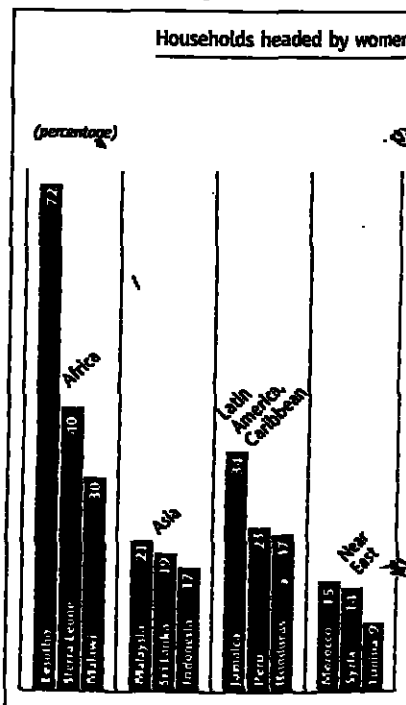
Sierra Leone: one woman's day



education of females has been cited as a major factor in increasing life expectancy to 70 years, compared with the Indian average of 56 to 58 years.

Ensuring that extension services address the specific needs of women - and their daily routines - as well as the deployment of more female extension agents can play a major role in improving the conditions of rural women. Technology designed to suit women's needs can contribute to mitigating drudgery and provide women with an opportunity to join in other more beneficial or rewarding activities.

On the policy side, creating a situation that allows women more access to good agricultural land and resources, including farm inputs, is an important step. Equal employment opportunities - and competitive wages - are also fun-



damental. Studies have shown a direct correlation between increased incomes for women and improvements in household food security. Lastly, access to and knowledge of credit and legal systems can help to empower women. Women's participation in decision-making is fundamental to their role in development and contribution to food security.



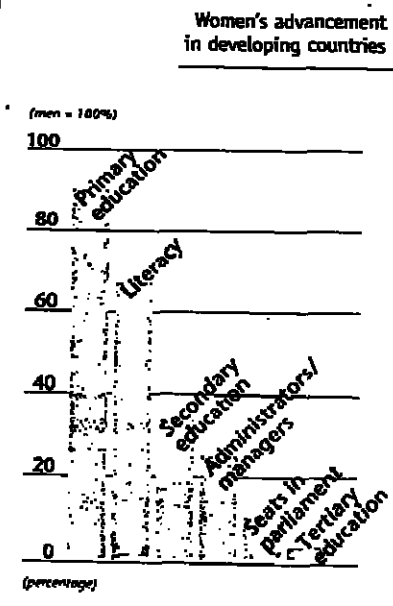
WOMENED WOMEN

KHARTOUM, SUDAN - The president has ordered the release of nearly 200 women from an overcrowded prison, state television reported.

HUELVA, SPAIN - A Spanish woman who drew blanket press coverage after conceiving eight babies has given birth to four boys and two girls by Caesarean section, hospital officials said.

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN - Afghanistan's Taliban militia said it had meted out undisclosed punishment to 225 women on Thursday for violating its rules on clothing.

(DISPATCHES)



Annunzio of Ghana is the Next U.N. Secretary-General

Handwritten text in Arabic script: "مكتبة الأمل"